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# SCIENCE AND THE GOSPEL.







# SCIENCE AND THE GOSPEL

OR THE

## CHURCH AND THE NATIONS

*A SERIES OF ESSAYS  
ON GREAT CATHOLIC QUESTIONS*

*SALVATOR MUNDI*

London

MACMILLAN AND CO.

AND

ANGLICAN AND INTERNATIONAL  
CHRISTIAN MORAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

8, OLD JEWRY, E.C.

1870

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Bequest of  
Hon. Charles Sumner,  
of Boston.  
(H. 21. 1830.)

OXFORD:

By T. Combe, M.A., E. B. Gardner, E. P. Hall, and H. Latham, M.A.,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

## PREFACE.

**T**HIS volume is intended to be the basis and symbol of the Christian Moral Science Association, for whose Provisional Council it is now published.

It clearly and ably discusses the chief catholic questions of the day; and, as these underlie the whole proposal and purpose of the Association, it is hoped that the volume will not only prove successful in securing for it a large and influential constituency, but that it will prepare those who join it to enter into the discussions of its future Congresses with full and intelligent understanding and appreciation of its scope and design.

It may be well to state that, although anonymous, the authorship of the volume is as catholic as its aim. One of the Essays is written by a clergyman of the Church of England, another



by a Presbyterian of the Church of Scotland, a third by a Congregationalist, and a fourth by a Baptist minister; while the responsible Editor is a Wesleyan, and has been assisted in his duty by a minister of the Society of Friends, and one of the Methodist New Connexion; so that, on the whole, seven schools of ecclesiastical thought and evangelical Christianity are represented and associated in this production.

The Adjudicators, whose names will be found appended to the Award, are a perfect guarantee for the impartial, scholarlike, and efficient treatment of the all-important questions which are discussed in this volume. And as the superintendence of the proofs has been kindly undertaken by a Double-First man at Oxford, we hope that the literary accuracy of the volume has been secured, although, from the fact of one of the authors being resident in Russia, and another in Germany, and the Editor sojourning in Rome while it was being printed, it was found impracticable for them personally to correct the press.

As the only object of the issue of this book is the promotion of the unity and usefulness of the Church of Christ as the Divine instrument

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for the salvation of the nations and of the world, and as it is offered to all who are willing to aid in its distribution at the bare cost of production, whilst upwards of One Thousand pounds will have been spent on its origination and distribution by the Council of the Christian Moral Science Association, it is hoped that a very large number of gentlemen will co-operate with the promoters of the volume by ordering for distribution amongst their friends one or more or many pounds' worth of it.

Parcels of eight copies will be sent on receipt of P. O. Order for £1, made payable to Robert George CATHER, 8, Old Jewry, London, E.C. The price of a single copy through the booksellers will be 3s. 6d., or post free, to any place within the United Kingdom, for 48 stamps, sent to 8, Old Jewry, London, E.C., or to the Publishers.

The Provisional Council have inserted after the Preface, as the most fitting introduction to the volume, the Prospectus of the Association, the Advertisement for Prize Essays, and the Adjudicators' Award.

They now commend the work to the Divine favour and blessing, praying that the God of all truth and grace and the Giver of unity may

be pleased to accept and bless this earnest effort for the promotion of His glory and the advancement of His kingdom in the world; and that the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, may alone and for ever be exalted and magnified and blessed by all our race. Amen, and Amen.

SALTBURN-BY-THE-SEA,

*Christmas, 1869.*

# PROSPECTUS

OF THE

## *Anglican and International Christian Moral Science Association.*

THE growth of a spurious rationalism, the prevalence of ritualistic tendencies, the low standard of commercial and public morals, the continuance of sectarian estrangement, the extent and depth of popular ignorance, and the dire effects of besetting covetousness amongst professing Christians, as seen in the sad spectacle of pauperism and irreligion, vice and crime, disease and premature death at home, as well as of abounding superstition, infidelity, and heathenism abroad, are calculated to create earnest self-inquiry amongst all Christian people in these lands, whether, while grateful to God for all that has been and is being accomplished by their respective Churches, some consultation cannot be had by them in common, so as, with their immense resources and promises, more effectually to counteract these giant evils, and bring down the more abundant blessing of God on our own empire and the world at large.

This is an age of patient investigation, of free and full discussion, as well as of increased personal communication amongst those who are interested in common pursuits—whether scientific, social, or ecclesiastical—as seen in the congresses of all kinds which have come to be held at this season, from year to year. Why, then, should there not be provided a similar opportunity for mutual recognition, prayer, and counsel, amongst all those who are agreed in the essentials of Catholic Christianity, are members of evangelical Churches, and are, therefore, in common responsible to Christ for the state of religion in these lands? But who is to call them together? it is asked. We answer, Let an association be formed for the purpose of bringing them together; of securing the efficiency of their meetings; of preserving and publishing their transactions; and of generally advancing the great objects which they have in common. And as there is a British Association for the Advancement of Science, and a National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, so let there be instituted an Association for the Cultivation of Christian Moral Science.

Understanding by Christian 'moral science' all that is essential and practical in religion, let this Association hold annually a Congress of

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Members of all evangelical Churches; and let its object be to bring out before the whole Church the sacred truths entrusted to her for the life of the nations, the extent and magnitude of the evils with which she has to contend, the resources, as to intelligence, piety, wealth, and influence committed to Christian people, and their solemn and awful responsibility, as catholic fellow-Churchmen, of whatever denomination, to lay aside their jealousy of one another, and so to survey and apportion the field of labour, to develope and distribute their agencies, and to unite their supplications and intercessions to Him who is their common Head, and with whom is the residue of the Spirit, as to overtake the vast arrears of ages of neglect at home, and to hasten the day when 'the heathen shall be given to the Son for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.'

The subjects to be discussed would, all of them, naturally fall under the following sections, viz.:—The Sacred Scriptures, Evangelical Worship, Christian Ethics, Catholic Institutions, Sound Learning, and Apostolic Finance, as the Source, the Strength, the Standard, the Seals, the Stamp, and the Resources of Moral Science. There would, therefore, be a section of the Congress corresponding to each of these; and is it not evident that at such a Congress questions of catholic interest would be considered and handled with an exhaustiveness and suggestive effect which is simply impossible in merely denominational assemblies, forasmuch as the sum of the wisdom of the whole Church is confessedly greater than that possessed by any part, however distinguished by graces or gifts of the Spirit?

After much inquiry and prayerful consultation, in simple dependence on the Divine help and favour, it is therefore proposed that an Association for the Cultivation of Christian Moral Science shall be formed; and a conference having been held in the Mayor's parlour, Manchester (kindly lent by his Worship), on Monday afternoon, the 8th October, 1866, a Provisional Council has been nominated, with power to add to their number.

The Provisional Council is to consist of seventy ministers and seventy lay gentlemen—i. e. twenty respectively of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, Wesleyan, Friends', and Evangelical Churches—one hundred and forty in all. One hundred and ten gentlemen of all Evangelical Churches in different parts of the United Kingdom have already joined the Council, and as soon as one hundred and forty have done so, the publication of Essays and the enrolment of the Association will be vigorously proceeded with.

## ADVERTISEMENT FOR PRIZE ESSAYS.

### *Anglican and International Association for the Promotion of Christian Moral Science.*

**T**HE Provisional Council beg to state that they are desirous to originate and publish a **SERIES** of **ESSAYS** on the chief catholic questions for the Church and the Nation, as the basis and symbol of the Association; and for this purpose they are disposed to expend One Thousand Pounds in the production and distribution of these Essays and other Publications, as follows:—

#### PRIZES.

**I.**—One Prize of Two Hundred Guineas for the best series of Four Essays, or Four Prizes of Fifty Guineas each for the Four best single Essays on the forenamed topics, viz.:

1. Church Organization; or, What is the visible Church of Christ?
2. Catholic Unity; or, What is the Unity of the visible Church of Christ?
3. Christian Ethics; or, What is the Science of Christian Morals?
4. National Religion; or, What will be the moral effect of the combination of the foregoing in a Christian Moral Science Association?

**II.**—The balance of the One Thousand Pounds to be expended, subject to the entire discretion of the Council, in securing the widest usefulness of the Essays at home and abroad.

**III.**—The MSS. must be the copyright of the Provisional Council for home and foreign uses.

#### CONDITIONS.

**I.**—The Series of Essays must not exceed 400 pages octavo, and the single Essays 100 each; and they must be popular in style, exhaustive in treatment, evangelical in principle, and thoroughly Catholic and practical in spirit and aim.

**II.**—The writers must keep steadily in view the purpose for which the Essays are sought, viz. the creation of an enlightened, earnest, and influential constituency for the proposed Association; and therefore they must master and embody in their productions the Prospectus of the **CHRISTIAN MORAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION**, which will be furnished to the writers by the Referee, on application.

## ADJUDICATION.

The following Gentlemen (although some are not members of the Provisional Council) have agreed to act as Adjudicators:—

The Very Rev. Dean Alford, Canterbury, *Chairman*.

Rev. Henry Allon, London.	Rev. Marmaduke Miller, Huddersfield.
Rev. Dr. W. L. Alexander, Edinburgh.	Rev. Dr. Raleigh, London.
J. B. Braithwaite, London.	Rev. Dr. Rees, Liverpool.
Ven. Archdeacon Cather, Tuam.	Rev. Dr. Rigg, Westminster.
Rev. J. P. Chown, Bradford.	Rev. Dr. Payne Smith, Reg. Prof. Div., Oxon.
Rev. Dr. Crawford, Reg. Prof. Div., Edinburgh.	Rev. Dr. Stacey, Sheffield.
Rev. R. W. Dale, Birmingham.	Rev. Dr. A. Thomson, Edinburgh.
Rev. R. W. Forrest, M.A., London.	Rev. S. Thornton, M.A., Birmingham.
Rev. Dr. Guthrie, Edinburgh.	Rev. Luke Wiseman, M.A.
Rev. G. Lamb, Hull.	
Rev. A. McLaren, Manchester.	

Rev. Dr. Cather, *Secretary and Referee*.

The Essays must be sent sealed, with initials and mottoes, on or before the 31st of May, 1869, to the Offices of the Association, No. 8, Old Jewry, London, E.C., and Manchester. The Referee will give any information required to intending Competitors.

It is hoped the Adjudicators' Award will be given by the 30th September, 1869, and that the Essays will be published by the 8th October, 1869.

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Council,

The Lord Oranmore.	H. M. Matheson.	} <i>Guarantors.</i>
J. Alexander.	W. McArthur, M.P.	
J. B. Braithwaite.	H. N. Nissen.	
R. G. Cather, LL.D.	G. Williams.	

## ADJUDICATORS' AWARD AND ADVERTISEMENT.

### *Anglican and International Essays.*

### **SCIENCE AND THE GOSPEL;**

#### **OR, THE CHURCH AND THE NATION.**

**T**HE Provisional Council of the Anglican and International Association for the promotion of Christian Moral Science beg to state that they are desirous to publish a SERIES of ESSAYS under the title 'SCIENCE AND THE GOSPEL,' as the basis and symbol of the Association. They are about to expend One Thousand Pounds in the distribution of these Essays in a volume of nearly 600 pages, to be printed at the Oxford University Press—bound in cloth, with gilt lettering, &c., and with beautifully engraved vignette by Jeens.

They have awarded to the Prize-writers Fifty Guineas each for the best Essays on the Chief Catholic Questions as to the Christian Church.

1. Church Organization; or, What is the Organization of the Visible Church of Christ?
2. Catholic Unity; or, What is the Unity of the Visible Church of Christ?
3. Christian Ethics; or, What is the Science of Christian Morals?
4. National Religion; or, What will be the moral effect of the combination of the foregoing in a Christian Moral Science Association?

The balance to One Thousand Pounds to be expended in distributing the first ten thousand copies, and in securing the widest usefulness of the Essays at home and abroad.

The Series of Essays will make about 600 pages octavo. They are popular in style, exhaustive in treatment, evangelical in principle, and thoroughly catholic and practical in spirit and aim.

The writers have kept steadily in view the purpose for which the Essays were sought, viz. the creation of an enlightened, earnest, and influential constituency for the proposed Association, and have mastered and embodied in their productions the Prospectus of the CHRISTIAN MORAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION. The volume ought to be in the hands of all evangelical ministers.



The following Gentlemen (although some are not members of the Provisional Council) have formed the Committee of Adjudication :—

The Very Rev. Dean Alford, Canterbury, *Chairman*.

Rev. Henry Allon, London.	Rev. Marmaduke Miller, Hudders-
Rev. Dr. W. L. Alexander, Edin-	field.
burgh.	Rev. Dr. Raleigh, London.
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Rev. Dr. Crawford, Reg. Prof. Div.,	Div., Oxon.
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Rev. Dr. Guthrie, Edinburgh.	ham.
Rev. G. Lamb, Hull,	Rev. Luke Wiseman, M.A.
Rev. A. McLaren, Manchester.	

Rev. Dr. Cather, *Secretary and Referee*.

The Council desire to distribute Ten Thousand more, by the co-operation of their friends, and offer the volume with this view at cost price, viz. Eight Copies for £1, or One Copy at 3s. 6d., through any Bookseller.\*

All P. O. Orders and Cheques must be sent to Robert George Cather, General Secretary, at the Offices of the Association, No. 8, Old Jewry, London, E. C.

It is hoped that the volume will be ready for delivery early in January, 1870.

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Council,

The Lord Oranmore.	H. M. Matheson.	} <i>Guarantors.</i>
J. Alexander.	W. McArthur, M.P.	
J. B. Braithwaite.	H. N. Nissen.	
R. G. Cather, L.L.D.	G. Williams.	

\* It was at first hoped to give 10 copies for £1, but the volume has exceeded by more than one-fifth its expected size and cost. R. G. C.

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ESSAY I.

THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

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THE  
CHURCH OF CHRIST,  
APOSTOLICAL AND MILLENNIAL.

‘Credo in sanctam ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum communionem.’—*Symbolum Apostolorum*.

“Ἴνα μὴ κατὰ πόλεις, μηδὲ κατὰ δήμους οἰκῶμεν, ἰδίοις ἕκαστοι διωρισμένοι δικαίοις, ἀλλὰ πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἡγώμεθα δημότας καὶ πολίτας, εἰς δὲ βίος ἡ καὶ κόσμος ὥσπερ ἀγέλης συννόμου νομῶ κοινῶ συντρεφόμενος.—*Plut. in Alex.* I. cap. vi.

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- I. The Introduction.
- II. The Relation of Form and Matter in the Apostolic Church.
- III. The Church in her Life and Essence.
- IV. The Conditions of Church Life.
- V. The Church as a World-Community, such as she existed in New Testament times.
- VI. Particular Churches in Relation to the Universal Church ; their Diversity yet possible Unity.
- VII. The Officers of the Apostolic Church.
- VIII. The Millennial Church, or the possibilities of the Church's return to her First Love. .

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

‘Die Herrschaft des guten Princips, so ferne Menschen dazu hinwirken können, ist also, so viel wir einsehen, nicht anders erreichbar, als durch Errichtung und Ausbreitung einer Gesellschaft nach Tugendgesetzen und zum Behuf derselben; einer Gesellschaft, die dem ganzen Menschengeschlecht in ihrem Umfange sie zu beschliessen durch die Vernunft zur Aufgabe und zur Pflicht gemacht wird.’—(KANT’S *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, Werke, x. S. 110.)

I. THERE are certain ideas which seem to loom in the distance before the fascinated gaze of man, without his being able ever fully to realize or embody them. Such an idea, it would seem, is that of the VISIBLE CHURCH, or embodiment of the kingdom of God upon earth. A dim and shadowy anticipation of it would even appear to have been presented to the minds of some of the great thinkers of antiquity. Zeno, the Stoic, looked forward to the time when ‘men would not be separated by cities, states, and laws, but that all should be considered fellow-citizens and partakers of one life; and that the whole world, like a united flock, should be governed by one common law.’ Such a conception, in the divisions and narrow particularisms of the ancient

world, might well be designated by Plutarch<sup>1</sup> the phantom of a dream; although he sought, at the same time, to find some realization of it in the conquests of Alexander.

But although surely illusive enough in that first stage of its existence, it has nevertheless continued from time to time to reappear, and promises as little as ever to disappear finally with its disturbing influence from before the mental vision of mankind. Men have hitherto sought the embodiment of it vainly as Arthur's Knights of the Round Table pursued their quest for the Holy Graal; yet a vision of the sacred cup was vouchsafed to Sir Galahad: and so purer and more elevated spirits of more than one section of the Church have had an intuition of the Church Catholic, so as to realize its existence and feel that it is something more than an idea—nay, as a spiritual fact waiting for its revelation.

2. The difficulties in the way of the realization of this ideal are, it is true, manifold, and come from a variety of sources. Indeed, such a community in the present state of mankind, in its purest and highest forms, cannot be conceived as other than ideal; towards the realization of which all attempts for the present must be considered as provisional.

There may seem no doubt to be a possible alternative. Unable to reach the ideal of a perfect ethical and spiritual commonwealth; we may possibly content ourselves with the best embodiment of it we *can* reach, and excusing the woeful imperfection of this on the ground that nothing higher is, in the present state, attainable, we may perhaps be able so to influence our

<sup>1</sup> Plut. in Alex. i. c. 6.

spirits as to substitute the concrete, defective realization, for the ideal after which we ought to strive.

The results of the Papacy may, however, well cast a doubt upon the wisdom of *this* course of procedure. If we sink the lofty ideal of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,' into any such miserably defective and fragmentary embodiment, and strive to content ourselves with this, we shall only injure the spring of our moral nature, and cease from that craving after perfection which is one of the noblest aspirations of our being. Far better that the Universal Church should remain simply an ideal, while we content ourselves with local and branch associations, confessedly provisional and imperfect, but yet having the lofty ideal of the Universal Christian Commonwealth, shining in the heavens before us, as the goal and heavenly constellation towards which our hopes and aspirations tend.

3. The great and good Neander has recognised in his writings upon Church History, that 'The historical development of the Christian Church as a body is similar to that of the Christian life in each of its members<sup>1</sup>.'

If we regard this as well founded—and of this, there seems to us, there can be no doubt—then we judge of the progress and future of the Church here from the course of the life-experience of the individual believer. The *first love* of the child of God, the glowing freshness and sunny radiance of the first days of the new life, may compare with the halcyon life and times of the

<sup>1</sup> See History of Planting and Training, &c., Bohn's Edition, p. 1.



apostolic Church. We have, perhaps, never realized in modern times, with all the ardour with which the missionary enterprise has been prosecuted, anything like the same diffusive and expansive power as was present in the evangelistic activity of the primitive Church. The work amongst the Karens of Burmah, in its rapidity and success, does indeed recall somewhat of the Pentecostal life and propagating power of the Church in the first glow of her zeal. One reason, perhaps, to be assigned for this, is the lack of *personal* trust in the Master on the part of the modern Church as compared with the primitive, and the excessive confidence in the ways and means afforded by our modern civilization. Be this, however, as it may, it does not seem that we can compare favourably the success of our modern missions with that conducted by Paul and Silas, and their coadjutors. Nor is it, we think, to be wondered at, if we compare the differing situations, then and now, of the disciples of Jesus Christ. Taking up the position already referred to, viz. that the history of the Church is very much a repetition upon a large scale of the spiritual life and experience of the individual believer, we shall find that that life has its various periods, each marked by its distinctive characteristics.

There is, first, the childlike freshness, the radiant peace, and heartfelt satisfaction of the believer as he beholds the cross, and knows, through believing, his sins forgiven and his transgression covered.

Then, to follow the picture of the life of God in the soul as depicted by the immortal dreamer of Elstow, we shall find this succeeded by the period of struggle—the Hill of Difficulty, the Lions, the Valleys of Humi-

liation and of the Shadow of Death, Vanity Fair, Doubting Castle, and last but not least dangerous, the Enchanted Ground. But finally comes in that restoration of the 'first love' upon a more secure and tried basis, in the experience described by Bunyan as the Land of Beulah. Those who look at the subject from the experimental point of view, will be surprised and gladdened by the oneness of mind to be found amongst devout men of all the evangelical parties, however *theologically* they may differ. To refer to this experience, referred to by Bunyan under the symbolical imagery of the Land of Beulah, as an instance,—we have noticed that writers so diverse in their theological views as Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley, Dr. Paysan and Fletcher of Madeley, agree as to the *fact*, however they may differ as to its *explanation*.

Now we believe that the Church will behold that period which may be named her Land of Beulah, as she has seen the cross, and looked upon Him who was pierced for her on the tree. But intermediate is the period of darkness, struggle, and doubt. May we not think of the Lions and the Valley of Humiliation, in the persecutions of the first period; of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, in the darkness of the middle ages, and the growth of that system of Papal superstition which brought back nearly all the abominations of heathenism within the bosom of the Church of Christ? -And if light dawned at the Reformation, and the afflicted one was enabled for a time to see light in God's light, is she not waging war now, amid the mockings and reproaches of Vanity Fair, with the bitter secularisms, theoretical and practical, of the period?

Nor have her trials ceased. Most devout thinkers, and amongst them the calm practised intellect of the author of the 'Natural History of Enthusiasm,' foresee a gigantic struggle yet to come<sup>1</sup>. But He who guides the humblest believer 'by the right way to the city of habitation,' will guide assuredly His Church, until she be brought into Canaan and receive rest from her enemies round about.

4. It is certainly, however, not our intention to intrude here the vagaries of a certain school of interpretation, in what ought to be a sober, calm, and scientific (at least so far as the soundness of its conclusions are concerned) treatise.

It is certainly, however, no vagary, as to the analogy betwixt the life of the believer and that of the Church. That the dreamer of Elstow was a master of the experimental life of the Christian, moreover, needs no proof.

5. There is, however, the more need for the adjustment of this point, because in any effort after union and co-operation on the part of the evangelical Churches, such as is contemplated by our Association for the Promotion of Moral Science, we are convinced that the facts of the life of God in the soul are the true basis on which to lay the foundation of mutual reconciliation. Christians have ever differed, more or less, on doctrinal points; and perhaps they will continue to do so. But have not our creeds been beaten out with the help of the fires of controversy, rather than heated in the crucible of Christian love?

Not that we would seek to dispense with these, as

<sup>1</sup> See 'Saturday Evening,' by Isaac Taylor.

some have, it seems to us, rashly desired. We believe the Holy Spirit has ever been present with the Church through the ages; and that those expressions of devout belief and earnest conviction which we find embodied in the creeds, however in part, through the fallibility of human zeal, they may have been disfigured with anathemas, were not, nevertheless, wholly without the guidance of the Divine Spirit.

6. A devout comparison, which seems to us both true and just, has been instituted between the letter of the Word and the human body of Christ—that body which cannot but be touched with the feeling of our infirmities though still without sin. The Bible, as it has been shown, has its *human* side; and if we admit that there were human infirmities in the body of the God-man, we may also admit without hesitation human infirmities, or rather the infirmities of books, though without positive error, to be in that Book, which is only the reflection and mirror of Him of whom Moses and the prophets spake. And so with the still more *human* creeds of the Church. They have their infirmities as we sorrowfully allow, but they have been honoured of God to be the battle-flags of the Church in her days of peril, out of which they may well have come with spots of dust and blood. They have not been fabricated, notwithstanding, without the superintendence of that Spirit who knows how to make use of human weakness and error as well as of human power and wisdom.

They have, however, been formed in the midst of controversy, when men's feelings were excited, and sometimes, alas! their angry passions roused against those whom they believed to be opposing the truth

of God. In such circumstances, as we have already noticed, it is natural that our doctrinal theology should bear to some extent, even in its authoritative instruments, the stamp of the periods when these originated. Dr. Chalmers, in his *Essay on Christian Union*<sup>1</sup>, thus discourses upon this matter:—‘In as far as controversy originated in the spirit of a rash and unbridled speculation, this is a source which, with our sounder philosophy and better understanding of the limit between the known and the unknown, is fast drying up. And there is, partly intellectual and partly moral, a profounder recognition of the authority of Scripture as paramount to all other authority; and perhaps on all sides a greater moral fairness in the interpretation of it. When these habits are consummated, controversy will cease, because the provocatives to controversy will then be done away.

‘The *theologia elenctica*, after having accomplished a most important temporary service, will then be dispensed with. Its technology will fall into desuetude; because, framed as it was for the special object of neutralizing the heresies which will then no longer exist, its employment will be uncalled for. God’s own truth expressed in God’s own language will form the universal creed of intelligent and harmonious and happy Christendom.

‘Men’s faith and their affections, when this intermediate and temporary apparatus is at length taken down, will come into more direct contact with Heaven’s original revelation; and the spirit of goodwill in man, which prompted Heaven’s message, will be felt in all its freshness and power when the uproar

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Christian Union*. London, 1845.

of controversy is stilled, and its harsh and jarring discords have died away into everlasting silence.

‘There will be system and generalization still, but founded on the generalizations of Scripture; and the doctrines in which many now terminate, as if they were the ultimate truths of the record, will be found themselves to be subordinate to the one and reigning expression of Heaven’s kindness to the world, by which the whole scheme of our redemption is pervaded.’

7. If these observations be well founded, then we ought to return to the Church as she was in the glowing beauty of her youth, not for *texts* and *precedents*, but for *principles*, by the use of which we may anticipate the nature and constitution of that Church for which we look, the visible Church of the future.

8. What then was the great combining principle of the Church of the Apostles—the principle which underlay and harmonized its conflicting elements as a whole? Not, we think, as with us, the possession of a common creed or symbol of doctrine. This we are not disposed to undervalue, or to affirm that it has been or is still wanting in practical value. It is nevertheless clear, that whether the Apostles’ Creed be a product of the apostolic age or not, that the life of the Church at that time was based upon a *real* rather than a *doctrinal* foundation. A doctrinal life is more or less of a reflective character; it belongs to a period of thought and comprehension, rather than of creativeness and imagination. There are creative periods and there are reflective periods in the Church’s life. The former is marked by the use of the active rather than the knowing or comprehending faculties, by an outburst of glowing activity and zeal, based on a clearer

faith and a closer approach to her Divine Lord on the Church's part. The latter, on the contrary, when weariness and reaction has set in, takes stock of the past, and seeks to express it in intellectual explanation and formula. For doctrine, for the most part, is a creation of the reflective rather than of the creative original period. The intellectual weighing of the concrete statements of Scripture has been the source of most of the controversies which have rent the Church, rather than the practical embodiment of these in life and action. Hence, church life, when regulated by intellectual formulæ rather than by living trust and close union with the Redeemer, must of necessity spring from the reflective form of the Church's activity and partake of its character. Just as in the human mind the twin faculties of observation and conscious reflectiveness are so correlated, that when the one is called into vigorous lively exercise, the other sinks into comparative quiescence and repose; so when the reflective elements of the Church's life has largely claimed attention, the creative and active have been to a great extent lost sight of. This, we think, may easily be proved from the fact that the awakening of controversy has generally proved the concomitant of the Church's decline from her first love and the fruitfulness of her first works.

9. Coming, however, back from these observations to the principle with which we started, we believe that the life of the apostolic Church was based upon a most vivid and powerful apprehension and conviction of Christ's continued presence with His disciples through the Holy Spirit. Take the Apostle of the Gentiles, who has been named the most 'dialectical' of the

leaders of the primitive Church, and you will find that the main argument he employs in two separate speeches in defence of his tenets, as well as his life and liberty, were simply narratives of his conversion. And if so with Paul, still more is this the case with the other New Testament writers. 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of Life . . . declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.'

This is merely an expression of the strongest personal conviction, based upon what we may name an immediate *intuition* of the abiding presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

10. Personal conviction of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ with His people being thus the leading characteristic of the Church life of the apostolic age, it ought to be reproduced in that period towards which we look, as the Land-of-Beulah period of the Church life of the future. No doubt that period of the Church's maturity, when it does arrive, will have its characteristic elements, marking it out from the life of the Church, while as yet in her bridal attire.

It will be free from the immaturity, the inexperience, and the inchoativeness of that period. Just as the mature man in Christ Jesus is free from the weakness, the misconceptions, the imperfect apprehensions of duty which belong to the new convert, the babe in Christ, so the mature Church will be free from the superstitious weaknesses, the misunderstandings of the substance of the Gospel, and the ignorance as to



the path of duty, of which we find notices in the apostolic letters, and, alas! greatly increased in the post-apostolic Church.

Passing through the storms and over the billows of many ages of controversy, and from 'tribulation' having learnt 'experience,' there will be no tendency to go off into those childish speculations, which however, perhaps inseparable from her condition, were nevertheless in many respects the bane of the early Church.

II. The duty, therefore, of the individual Christian is the duty of the whole Church—nay, of all that individually and collectively love the Lord Jesus. We are bound to contribute as much as in us lies to the edifying of the body of Christ—not merely the hewing out and perfecting of the living stones severally—until we come 'Into the unity of the faith of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ<sup>1</sup>.' The prayer of the Master is yet far from being realized, 'that they may be one as we are,' and that they who should believe through the Word 'may be all one<sup>2</sup>.' No doubt good ends may have been and still are served by the division of the Church into sections and denominations. It may well be, as we shall yet have occasion to notice, that the richness and variety of the life of the Church may be greatly increased from this very circumstance. But we may very well admit this, and yet see the great evil, scandal, and mischievous results of the present divisions and separations in the body of Christ. It is no doubt the province of the Father 'out of evil' still to be 'educing

<sup>1</sup> Ephes. iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> John xvii. 11, 21, 22.

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good;’ and in the past history of the Church He has abundantly exercised this prerogative. It is not ours to comfort ourselves with this reflection, lest we fall into the dangerous error into which the enemy has decoyed souls during every stage of the Church’s history—‘Let us do evil that good may come.’ Assuredly there is no essential difference between saying ‘Let us do evil that good may come,’ and, ‘Let us tolerate evil, suffer it to exist when we are able to put an end to its existence, that good may come.’

The world, while very far from inclined to look into and examine the matter fairly, has, nevertheless, a wonderfully clear perception of the superficial infirmities and inconsistencies of Christians and Christian denominations.

When, therefore, it perceives the Christian world so much broken up—not, alas! only by outward divisions and visible separations, but, what is worse, by bitterness of party spirit, and distrust, and even rancour—it not only scoffs, but when the truth is pressed upon its acceptance, cries out with Pilate, incredulously, ‘What is truth?—were there such certainty in the truths you profess, it would be visible in greater unanimity and consistency of action!’ Or, again, it is asked, ‘Which of the Christian bodies are we to join? which of them is in possession of the truth?’

12. It must not, moreover, be forgotten, that this has ever been a powerful vantage-ground for that corrupt system known as the Church of Rome—a vantage-ground which she is using at present as vigorously as ever; and the advantage derivable from it is the greater in this age, when the cry for union is heard on all sides. Bossuet wrote his ‘*Histoire des Varia-*

tions,' and, though effectively answered at the time, Rome knows her own strong points, and ever renews the struggle, with new forms of the same weapon, to the deluding of many even earnest souls. It cannot, moreover, be denied that Protestantism, while it may be affected by the increased longing for union, yet, at the same time, shows a growing particularism and intolerance. The bonds of denominationalism are, with the higher earnestness of our day, taken into greater veneration as of the very substance of the faith.

The consequence is, that we see in many quarters less co-operation and recognition of our common faith. The missionary enterprise is visibly more denominational, since even the smallest of the sects are not content to support the great missionary societies, but must have each its own, to transplant if possible the peculiarities of its own Church organization and particularisms amongst the heathen. There is but little international Christian communion. The Briton contemplates the Continental under the light of his own often narrow exclusiveness; and doubtless the continental Churches have also their own peculiar hindrances to a freer and nobler international Church life.

It would be ungrateful not to recognise the good which has been effected as to this matter by the Evangelical Alliance. We have been grieved to observe, however, how much this blessed idea has failed from that very narrow particularistic spirit we have been referring to. Some have found their way to the meetings of the Alliance, who could not, nevertheless, partake with the assembled brethren at the Lord's table;

thus showing that whatever friendly feeling they might show, it was not based upon the recognition of a common brotherhood in Christ. Alas! what multitudes of Christians have yet to learn that 'neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith that worketh by love.'

The divisions of evangelical Christendom are, however, unmistakeably about this very 'circumcision' and 'uncircumcision.'

13. As it stands with Protestantism at present, and we have often heard the admission made, that even the corrupt Church of Rome has a mission for our instruction. She holds, at least in theory, the universality of our common Christianity, and so far protests against the narrowness and exclusiveness of our national and particularistic systems. The spirit of these systems and sections is such, in part, that one might judge that each is a special favourite of Heaven, by whom their plans and enterprises are thus to be favoured above their neighbours and rivals. It is sad to perceive, moreover, how much time in our conventions and popular assemblies is occupied in self-laudation, and eulogies of the perfection of the systems with which the speakers happen to be connected. It were well that Christians would learn that there may be as much selfishness and self-exaltation in extolling our own section of the Church, as in holding forth our own individual claims to admiration. It were well if we learnt that humility is a virtue to be practised by denominations as well as by single Christians!

14. That it is indeed true that this particularistic spirit has increased upon us, we have but to look to the period of the Reformation. A Knox then could be

a pastor in Geneva, a travelling preacher and evangelist in the north of Episcopalian England, and the founder of Presbyterianism in Scotland. Cranmer, the Episcopal Primate of England, was not above consulting with Calvin as to the convocation of a Protestant Council<sup>1</sup>.

Dr. Cunningham, in his *History of the Church of Scotland*, thus writes of the unity and fraternal intercourse which prevailed amongst the Reformers, both British and Continental:—‘For many years after the Reformation the utmost harmony and good-will seems to have prevailed amongst all the Protestant Churches. The fact that they had separated from Rome united them one to another; there was but one Papal Church and one Protestant Church. The ministers of one reformed nation were freely admitted into the pulpits of another; the nationality of Churches was still unknown. Knox ministered in England, in Geneva, in Scotland; the Church of which he was an apostle was not limited to his native country or to any country. It was wherever Protestantism was. When there was persecution in England, many of its preachers came into Scotland; when there was persecution in Scotland, they returned to England. Geneva was ever the refuge of all. The General Assembly formally gave its sanction to the Helvetic Confession, with some trifling exceptions, and wrote friendly letters to their brethren the bishops and pastors in England, who had renounced the Roman Antichrist, and professed with them the Lord Jesus in sincerity<sup>2</sup>.’ Oh why has not this continued? How much would it have tended to the edification of the

<sup>1</sup> See Bungener’s *Calvin, sa Vie et ses Œuvres*, Bk. IV. c. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Cunningham’s *Church Hist. of Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 507, 508.

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Church! How much to the dissemination of Bible truth! And how far to shut the mouths of those who have been the enemies of the truth!

15. We trust the evil, in these days of aspiration on the part of many of the members of the body of Christ after greater unity, is becoming apparent, and that our Anglican and International Association for the Promotion of Moral Science may worthily fill up and supply what is yet lacking in the labours of the excellent Evangelical Alliance towards this end. There is needed, we think, a more thorough, practical, and *working* union, and it is this we hope that our Association will supply.

16. It will be right perhaps to say here what method we intend to pursue as to the treatment of the subject in the following pages. In the apostolic Church, as already noticed, we find an anticipation and prophecy of the splendour of the Church in her latter-day glory. The 'first love,' lost amid the storms of trial and temptation in our every-day life, is again restored, when the pilgrim to Zion reaches that land, where 'They heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear on the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land<sup>1</sup>.'

So in the Church we may expect, in reviewing the lineaments of the countenance of the apostolic Church, we shall find much that is a presentiment of her latter-day glory. But if it can be shown that a federal union of the Scriptural Churches of the present was adumbrated in the life of the apostolic Churches, surely we may conclude that such a federal union will not be

<sup>1</sup> See Pilgrim's Progress, Part I. description of the Land of Beulah,

incompatible with the perfection of the latter-day glory. Yea, not only so; we think also that, under these circumstances, the sectional character and separation of many who are of the one body will even tend to give greater fulness and richness to the body into which by common consent the various sections of the Church will merge.

17. If this can be shown, then our Moral Science Association may well point to a sufficient *raison d'être*—to a sufficient justification for its existence—its organization to labour forwards towards the accomplishment of such a blessed and desirable result.

We propose, therefore, for what follows—we trust not without the aid of that blessed Spirit, who

‘Prefers

Above all temples, the upright heart and pure<sup>1</sup>—

to endeavour to unveil some of the lineaments of the Church, such as we find her depicted in the New Testament, while as yet in her bridal attire, in order that we may catch, if possible, prospectively, a glimpse of her beauty, when the Lord shall bring back the captivity of Zion.

<sup>1</sup> Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book I. 17.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE RELATION OF FORM AND MATTER IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

‘One of the specific differences between Christ and other founders of religions was, that as He did not impart a complete and sharply defined system of *doctrines* to His Apostles, and left it to their human activity, under the guidance of the Divine Spirit, to form such a system from the elements which He bestowed, so also He founded no outwardly complete and accurately defined religious community with a fixed form of government, usages, and rules of worship; but, after implanting the Divine germ of the community, left it also to human agency, guided by the same Holy Spirit, to develop the *forms* which it should assume under the varying relations of human society.’—NEANDER’S *Life of Christ*, Bohn’s Edition, p. 131.

‘While the old unreformed Church Associations are continually prejudiced by this *particularism*, Protestants, on the contrary, acknowledge every ecclesiastical society which holds Christian truth in greater or less purity and clearness, to be a preparatory institution for the kingdom of God, and as such belonging to the *Universal Christian Church*, whose true essence is the *invisible Church*, the entire number of all true believers throughout the world.’—GIESELER’S *Ecclesiastical History*, p. 2.

1. As the Church as an institution is possessed of life, so this life must needs manifest itself in some external forms or mode of organization. The life of the Church is that mode of consciousness, feeling, and action which she derives from her Divine Head. But as it is impossible that there should be life without



action, or manifestation thereof, within the sphere of humanity, so that *action* must assume some determinate *modes* or shapes whereby it may obtain expression. True it is, indeed, as already observed, that all Church organizations and associations are only provisional, as embodying the aspirations of Christ's people after that universal kingdom which shall never know an end<sup>1</sup>.

2. In some respects the apostolic Church or Churches seem to have come nearer this ideal than has been done by any subsequent endeavour to embody it; although this also, were it but from the very fact that it has passed away, must have been necessarily imperfect.

No doubt this arose in part from the circumstances in which it was placed; but, with every drawback, it must be allowed to be a more complete embodiment of the ideal for which mankind is waiting. There was greater *universality* in the apostolic Church. The seeds of future division were indeed to be seen on every hand: yet in spite of the opposition betwixt Jew and Gentile Christian, the union of the spirit was wonderfully preserved in the bond of peace. There was substantially one faith, one Lord, and one baptism. There was none of that *national* spirit which, while it may have its warrantable and beneficial results and aspects, has been, and still is, the fruitful parent of much of that *particularism* under which the Church suffers. The English Christian can sympathise but very imperfectly with the French, while the German is equally estranged from both. Of

<sup>1</sup> Vide Kant's Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft, S. 113-115. Semple's Translation, pp. 121-123.

this, however, we find no trace in the New Testament. There all, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, were reckoned as one in Christ Jesus. It will indeed, no doubt, in part account for this, that the Church existed within the Roman State, then well-nigh a world-wide or universal empire.

The growth however of the national spirit, and the differences thereby engendered, readily infects the Christian as well as the rest of society; so that our Christianity is largely tinged by the various provincial and national peculiarities and prejudices with which it comes into contact. Still, product of circumstances as it may have been—as our national and provincial peculiarities are the growth of our diverse positions and relationships—there nevertheless seems to be no question as to the relative superiority of the first age over the second. The *universal brotherhood* of mankind, that idea which, dimly seen, floated before the mental vision of Zeno the Stoic, is also, alas! an idea which yet remains to be realized. It was, however, unmistakeably understood and acted upon by the Church of the New Testament. We believe, moreover, that it will be certainly revived and actualized in the Church of the future.

3. There was, secondly, greater PURITY in the Church of the Apostles. Not that there was absolute freedom from corruption or depravation of manners on the part of converts newly dug ‘out of the fearful pit and the miry clay’ of Gentile dissoluteness of manners. This was not to be expected; yet, as a point of fact, there was *comparatively* great purity. Hedged in by the fiery wall of persecution, there were fewer temptations to receive unworthy members into the fellowship.

4. There was, moreover, in the primitive Church greater clearness of faith, so that the power and presence of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls were more vividly felt. The Lord Jesus Christ was apprehended to be the living Captain of His people's salvation; and the fact of the continuance of His presence invisibly with His people was powerfully realized from the presence of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, operating in those mighty works, such as the healing of disease, the casting out of devils, &c., which were wrought through His agency. Hence the wondrous clearness and animation of faith, going out in the zeal, activity, and fruitful life of the apostolic communities.

5. Such being the general character of the early Church, it is important to inquire, what were the relations of the *external form*—the *visible organization* of that Church, the means by which she *visibly* carried—to the internal life and spirit which actuated her, and wrought mightily in her, by the grace of God, to the doing of that work? Was there an inherent connexion between them, so that the *outward form* and *constitution* of the apostolic Church formed part and parcel of her Divinely instituted life? In other words, had the *form* of the Church a *Divine sanction*? and is it to be considered Divine and unalterable, as well as the *matter* and *substance* of the life which it served to express?

6. I am aware that in approaching this subject I am coming into a region marked everywhere by the volcanic fires of controversy fierce and prolonged. Men of great learning and clearness of intellect, as well as of much devoutness of spirit, have pronounced differently, and do still pronounce differently, upon almost every one of the points involved. And a thorough review of the

subject in the works of those who have written were, within our narrow limits, wholly out of the question. Any view which the present writer may bring forward cannot but be open to exception, as well as the views of numbers of far abler men who have treated the subject. Still, however, a remark or two may be hazarded which may go to justify the present writer for venturing into this perilous field.

The first of these is, that, so far as he knows himself, he has no theory to support. He believes that in all the evangelical Churches traces of apostolic principles and precedents are to be found, as perfect apostolicity in none. Such being the case, he is at least under no temptation to find Episcopacy, Presbytery, Congregationalism, Methodism, or any other *ism*, pure and simple, in the apostolic Church. How strange this is, when a man has already placed faith in one of the current systems as alone apostolic, may easily be seen, and, we may add, heard, by those who will take the trouble to discuss or converse with those who are the staunch adherents of the respective systems. We bring great part of what we see with us, and unless we can divest ourselves of those prepossessions (no easy task!) we shall easily see what we desire to see.

7. But again, it must be confessed that of all the methods employed to sift out the truth as to these points, the purely *scientific* has been the least employed. If a plausible case can only be got up by varying interpretations of Scripture and passages from the Fathers, the combatants hold themselves to have done enough to establish their own side of the question. But every one, with any degree of candour, who has tried to read the numerous works which are taken up with the treat-

ment of this subject, will acknowledge, especially if he read them with a view to ascertain what is the historical fact, they deserve very much the apostolic designation of 'doubtful disputations<sup>1</sup>.'

There is usually great difficulty in stopping when the author comes into the region of the uncertain, and hence the first, second, and third centuries have been mingled as if the institutions existent in them were of necessity exactly alike. The Scriptures are indeed, as it seems to us, the only *authority* from which proof may be drawn. At the same time we may surely, from a scientific point of view, compare what we find in Scripture with what emerges in the earlier notices of the Church by the apostolic and post-apostolic Fathers.

The documents are, however, scanty, and the allusions often perilous to him who would use them to prove a case. Has not, indeed, so much been made of *allusions*, or seeming allusions, both in Scripture and the Fathers? The torturing of texts of Scripture to make them confess what they were never intended to prove, is a kind of inquisition, not unknown to theologians of every school.

8. Passing, however, from these preliminary observations to the question itself: have we reason to believe that the *form* of the Church was *Divinely* prescribed for all time?

In reply to this question, there is a variety of considerations at which we look, which we think will materially assist us in this question.

Have we, for example, forms of prayer prescribed? There is, indeed, a single form to be found<sup>2</sup>, but it exists in two varying shapes, and seems to have been

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiv. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 9, &c.; Luke xi. 2, &c.

prescribed by the Saviour in answer to an urgent application rather than of His own accord. Its solitary character can scarcely be held to warrant the use of liturgical forms, if we look to it as an authority, while as little do we find authority for their rejection. Then we have no uniform account by the different Evangelists of the institution of the Lord's Supper. An awful solemnity is attached by certain sects of Christendom, even to the present day, to every jot or tittle connected with this ordinance; yet it is singular that the words connected with the institution vary, as related by the Four Evangelists, or by Paul, in 1 Cor. xi.

So far as the ritual of the ordinance is concerned, we have scarcely any instructions at all. Ordinances which all the evangelical Churches have agreed to pretermitt are described with even greater minuteness and detail than some which they continue to observe. Such are, for example, the washing of the disciples' feet, and the kiss of peace. Of Baptism we have no authorized description at all, unless we accept the hypothesis of our Baptist brethren, that it is sufficiently indicated by the word βαπτίζω. Dr. Hanna has noticed that not even the superscription above the Cross, about which, judging the Evangelists by ourselves, we should have supposed them to be very exact, is given in the same words by the several sacred biographers<sup>1</sup>. The same may be said of the last words spoken from the Cross, whose accuracy we might surely have expected the disciples religiously to preserve.

9. But why thus apparently indifferent to the literal reproduction of the most sacred words of the

<sup>1</sup> Hanna's *Last Days of our Lord's Passion*, pp. 172, 173.

Saviour? We are constrained to say, in reply, that it is as significant what the Spirit of God, speaking in the holy men who wrote our Scriptures, has omitted to do, as that which He has done.

Religious forms may become, not the husks but the graves of the truths they were originated to contain and express. A form which was originally adopted purely as a means to an end, may become fossilized into an object of veneration for succeeding generations in itself; while the truth it was intended to embody may be lost sight of. There is even, as it seems to us, a radically different point of view between the Pauline Christianity of the New Testament, and the Christianity of the Reformation Churches. With the former, 'Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love<sup>1</sup>;' with the other, it is difficult to believe that bishops, general assemblies, and deacons, &c., are merely things expedient, and not of the essence of the Gospel.

10. Dr. Whately has thus expressed himself with regard to the remarkable omissions already referred to, in some passages well worthy of transcription:—'And among the important facts which we can collect and fully ascertain from the sacred historians, scanty and irregular and imperfect as are their records of particulars, one of the most important is, *that very scantiness*<sup>2</sup> and incompleteness in the detail, that absence of any full and systematic description of the formation and regulation of Christian communities that has just been noticed. For we may plainly infer, from this very circumstance, the design of the Holy Spirit that those details, concerning which no precise directions

<sup>1</sup> Gal. v. 6. Compare vi. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Italics in the original.

accompanied with strict injunctions are to be found in Scripture, were meant to be left to the regulation of each Church, in each age and country. On any point in which it was designed that all Christians should be, everywhere and at all times, bound as strictly as the Jews were to the Levitical Law, we may fairly conclude they would have received directions no less precise, and descriptions no less minute than had been afforded to the Jews.

‘It has often occurred to my mind that the generality of even studious readers are apt, for want of sufficient reflection, to fail of drawing such important inferences as they often might from the *omissions*<sup>1</sup> occurring in any work they are perusing—from its *not*<sup>1</sup> containing such and such things relative to the subject treated of. There are many cases in which the non-insertion of some particulars which, under these circumstances, we might have calculated on meeting with, in a certain book, will be hardly less instructive than the things we do meet with.

‘And this is much more especially the case when we are studying works which we believe to have been composed under Divine guidance. For, in the case of mere human compositions, one may conceive an author to have left out some important circumstances, either through error of judgment, or inadvertency, or from having written merely for the use of a particular class of readers in his own times and country, without any thought of what might be necessary information for persons at a distance, and in after ages; but we cannot, of course, attribute to any such causes omissions in the *inspired*<sup>1</sup> writers.

<sup>1</sup> Italics in original.



‘On no supposition whatever can we account for the admission, by all of them, of many points which they do omit, and of their scanty and slight mention of others, except by considering them as withheld by the express design and will (whether *communicated*<sup>1</sup> to each of them or not) of their Heavenly Master, restraining them from committing to writing many things which naturally some or other, at least, would not have failed to record.

‘We seek in vain there [in the sacred books of the New Testament] for many things which, humanly speaking, we should have most surely calculated on finding. No such thing is to be found in our Scriptures as a Catechism, or regular *Elementary Introduction*<sup>1</sup> to the Christian religion; nor do they furnish us with anything of the nature of a systematic Creed, set of Articles, Confession of Faith, or by whatever other name one may designate a regular complete compendium of Christian doctrines; nor, again, do they supply us with a Liturgy for ordinary Public Worship, or with Forms for Administering the Sacraments, or for conferring Ho’y Orders; nor do they give any precise *directions*<sup>1</sup> as to these and other ecclesiastical matters, anything that at all corresponds to a rubric or set of canons.

‘Now these omissions present a complete moral demonstration that the Apostles and their followers must have been *supernaturally withheld*<sup>1</sup> from recording great part of the institutions, instructions, and regulations which must, in point of fact, have proceeded from them; withheld *on purpose*<sup>1</sup> that other Churches in other ages and regions might not be led to consider

<sup>1</sup> Italics in original.

themselves bound to adhere to several formularies, customs, and rules that were of local and temporary appointment, but might be left to their own discretion in matters in which it seemed best to Divine Wisdom that they should be so left<sup>1</sup>.

11. If such be the force of the argument in this case, from the silence of the sacred writers, so as to amount, as Dr. Whately affirms, to *a complete moral demonstration* that they were withheld from laying down directions as to these matters of external form, then we think it follows, that although the *forms* in which the life of the apostolic Church might and probably did flow *naturally* from the life itself, yet that they were not prescribed as Divine arrangements for all time. On the contrary, the Church, retaining the purity of its life and the principles of its Founder, was, like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, within of course the range prescribed by the necessary conditions of its Divine life, to suit herself to the various circumstances, and become 'all things to all men.'

12. The same position may further be sustained by noticing the exceedingly scanty proof, and the doubtful nature of the proof, brought forward by the upholders of priestly systems, as to the authority vested in them. The famous 'Thou art Peter,' &c., we shall not pretend to deal with the exegesis further than to cite the exposition of Dr. Whately, surely a competent and unprejudiced exegetist so far as this question is concerned. He says<sup>2</sup>:—'Then, again, with respect to the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," which our Lord promised (Matt. xvi. 19) to give to Peter, the Apostles could not,

<sup>1</sup> Whately's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 105-108.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 102-104.

I conceive, doubt that He was fulfilling that promise to Peter and the rest of them conjointly when He appointed unto them a kingdom, and when, on the Day of Pentecost, He began the building of His Church, and enabled them, with Peter as their leader and chief spokesman, to open a door for the entrance of about three thousand converts at once, who received daily accessions to their number. The Apostles, and those commissioned by them, had the office of granting admission into the society from time to time to such as they judged qualified. . . . And that this society or Church was that "kingdom of heaven" of which the keys were committed to them, and which they had before claimed as "at hand," they could not doubt. They could not have been in any danger of cherishing any such presumptuous dream, as that they or any one else, except their Divine Master, could have power to give or refuse admittance to the mansions of immortal bliss.

'On the whole, then, one who reads the Scriptures with attention and with candour, will be at no loss, I conceive, to ascertain what was the sense, generally, in which our Lord's disciples would understand His directions and injunctions. Besides what is implied, naturally and necessarily, in the very institution of a community, we know also what the instructions were which the disciples had already been accustomed to receive from their Master, and what was the sense they had been used from childhood to attach to the expressions He employed. And as we may be sure, I think, how *they* would understand His words, so we may be equally sure that He would not have *failed to undeceive* them had they mistaken His real meaning;

which therefore, we cannot doubt, must have been that which these disciples apprehended.'

13. Concerning this matter also Dr. Albrecht Ritschl thus writes:—'There was in the days of the Apostles no uniform constitution of the Church. It is a false assumption that during this epoch the authority embracing the whole Church within its circle was vested in the college of the Apostles. Opposed to this, in the first place, is the division of the sphere of activity between Paul and the other original Apostles (Gal. ii. 7, 10); secondly, the circumstance already noticed, that Paul claimed no jurisdiction over the communities he founded; finally, the fact that if even James may have accepted superior episcopal authority amongst the Jewish Christians, the other or original Apostles, according to their own declaration (Acts vi. 4), had renounced their claims to Church management<sup>1</sup>.'

It seems pretty clear, moreover, that the Apostles never claimed what we understand as a *legal* control over the Churches under their superintendence. All the evangelical Churches even exercise this power more or less at present through the State acting as trustee upon the buildings and other property held by them as denominations. In order to preserve this, Christian communities must, for the most part, adhere to the religious opinions engrossed in their trust-deeds. No doubt such an element of constraint is very diminutive; but still it exists, and doubtless tends, in no small degree, to restrain congregations from avowedly changing their traditional opinions. It is easy, how-

<sup>1</sup> Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche, SS. 437, 438. See the whole chapter on the 'Episcopate as a Church Office amongst the Gentile Christians.'

ever, to see, that legal constraint, even to this extent, was not vested in the Apostles or their associates. Their sole instrument for inducing obedience was purely *moral* or *spiritual* influences, through the conviction wrought in the mind of their hearers and followers that they were indeed the organs of the Holy Spirit. Hence we find in their requests to the Churches—such as Paul's request to the Corinthians to cast the incestuous person out of their fellowship—that they persuade and exhort, but never appeal to any other power of which they were in possession. We think this to be of some importance, as it appears to be very evident that the main element in the great apostasy was precisely substitution of legal or quasi-legal power for that which was purely moral and spiritual<sup>1</sup>.

14. We gather from the foregoing quotations and statements, that the following was the relation of the *life* of the apostolic Church to its form or organization.

Christ expected that His disciples would continue to associate together as a united family after His ascension. So much is indeed implied in the commission given them<sup>2</sup>, and the direction imparted by the Lord at the time of His ascension, 'that they were to tarry at Jerusalem until they received power from on high.' United by the indwelling of the ever-living Spirit in their hearts, they were to go forth and disciple all nations, baptizing them into the 'name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.'

<sup>1</sup> Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche, von Albrecht Ritschl, S. 437.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts i. 4.

No forms were, however, prescribed for the embodiment of the life which united them as disciples in a common bond of 'righteousness,' 'peace,' and 'joy in the Holy Ghost.' The Saviour, together with His disciples, had conformed to the synagogal forms during His stay with them on earth, and they were familiar with its simple arrangements. Guided by the Holy Spirit, who was to lead them, they adopted also these forms in the creation of the first Christian communities, superinducing only those sacramental and other rites which they had been taught by the Saviour to observe, and at the same time adding such other arrangements as the necessity of the case seemed to demand. Thus they introduced Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the first an initiatory rite derived from the Jewish purifications, the other, from the Jewish Passover; also the laying on of hands, and the *φίλημα τῆς εἰρήνης*, the kiss of peace, with which they were also previously acquainted. These arrangements, acting under the teachings of the Divine Spirit, yet not so it would appear as to be entirely exempt from error<sup>1</sup>, they made as suitable as possible to the organization, expression, and extension of that new life and power which they were commissioned to carry to the ends of the earth. The wine was, indeed, put into new bottles, but at the same time there was no departure from the ordinary modes of human organization which were patent to the general mind, and fitted, as already known, to recommend the truth expressed by the forms to those with whom it came into contact.

15. One condition was indeed indispensable. It was necessary that these forms should not hamper, be out

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 11.

of keeping with, or contradictory to, the *life* they were intended to foster and set forth. The two or three, with Christ in the midst of them, was the *normal* form; and nothing inconsistent with this presence of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in His disciples, could be permitted.

16. We are, nevertheless, far from admitting that much may not be derived from even the organization of the apostolic Church. If the Church in her bridal attire be the glorious presentiment, as we have seen, of the Church in her latter-day glory, when she shall return from her widowhood, then even the *form* of the apostolic Church cannot be indifferent to us. The 'lump' or mass of humanity fused by the Divine Spirit to its most fluent or liquid state, was then in the state most fitting to crystallize into the organic form which it was destined to assume. Not that the primitive Church was uninfluenced in the formation of its constitution by the circumstances in which it was placed. The wisdom of all legislation, and the right embodiment of it in actual legal forms or positive law, does not, surely, lie in the creation of laws faultlessly perfect abstractly considered. No. All human, and even all Divine legislation, must be conformed, accommodated to, the character, circumstances and peculiarities, moral and physical, in which the people are placed for whose behoof the legislation is to be carried out into actual practice. Thus the Divine Legislator permitted polygamy to exist amongst even the chosen people on account of the 'hardness of their hearts<sup>1</sup>,' and the danger of its prohibition leading to worse evils.

In like manner, in the Christian Church, the Seven

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 8; Mark x. 5.

were elected to meet a special<sup>1</sup> want in the growing community, and some have even held, a *temporary* want.<sup>2</sup>

Be this as it may, so far as the external arrangements of the Christian Church are concerned, they appear to have been gradually introduced under the guidance of the Apostles, as the necessities of the case demanded.

17. One point, however, is clear, and ought to be taken note of. It nowhere appears that the mere *external form* of the Church was held in veneration in apostolic times, apart from the practical purpose to be served. None of the arrangements were, like a sixth finger or toe, a mere excrescence, but nevertheless reverentially regarded because of its supposed virtues as a piece of symbolism, or for its antiquity. The whole body of the Church was 'fitly joined together<sup>3</sup>,' and every joint supplied its proper quantum to the activity, health, and welfare of the whole body. There were no fatty deposits or tubercular secretions to form the seats of future disease. No office sprang into existence for mere ornament, to be gilt pinnacles, and without any proper use.

The apostolic Church was a sternly utilitarian institution. There was neither superfluity nor defect in the offices and arrangements created for its government. Originally, it would seem, it was superintended by the Apostles, not by legal constraint, but by moral influence, willingly accorded to those who had been the Divinely selected witnesses of the Saviour's life, death, and resurrection. And doubtless the remainder of the

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi. 1, 2, sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Rothe, *Anfänge der Christ. Kirche*, 1 Th. S. 169.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. iv. 16.



Seventy, if any remained, would be associated with them in this power.

And so, when an additional apostle or witness of the Saviour's life and acts was needed, Matthias was elected; when a murmuring arose on the part of the Hellenist Jews against their Hebrew brethren, on account of the real or supposed neglect of their widows in the distribution of alms, the seven men were chosen; and finally, we discover in the eleventh chapter of the Acts<sup>1</sup> that elders or presbyters had come into existence. Missionaries were wanted, moreover, to perambulate the country and carry the Gospel to new places, and accordingly evangelists were called out and despatched. Thus Barnabas and Paul were selected by the Church at Antioch, by direction of the Holy Ghost, to carry the Gospel to the heathen; but it does not appear that they entered all at once, or before the mighty works were wrought by their hands in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece, into the accredited position of Apostles of the Lord Jesus. The Apostle indeed, we learn, supported his claim to be considered an Apostle on the ground of these mighty works<sup>2</sup>.

So we think it can also be shown with regard to the other offices of the Church mentioned<sup>3</sup>. They were the charisms of the Holy Spirit, which formed, in some sense, the soul of the Church, Christ's body, to the edifying of that body; and there was thus nothing merely ornamental, nothing useless, all subserved practically, in the most effective way, the ends for which they were designed and the interests of the body<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi. 30.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 28-30; Eph. iv. 11.

<sup>4</sup> See Neander's Church History, pp. 252, 253, 255, 260, 263.

18. The procedure of Wesley in the formation of that organization which, by the blessing of God, has done so much for modern England, appears to us to be strictly in accordance with apostolical precedent. Not that we believe that Wesley stood in circumstances in which he was equally protected from error by excess or defect, as the Apostles were protected. They were *specially* endowed with the Holy Spirit, so as to fit them peculiarly for their office and work. Great as the services of Wesley were, and those of his associates, they were not nevertheless, and they would not have claimed to be, so aided and protected from error in their arrangements, as were the Apostles and their associates. Discounting, however, the more powerful life, the inspiration that freed them from positive error, and the greater closeness and nearness of the Divine Master, we believe that the apostolic arrangements were as purely utilitarian, as much called for by present exigencies and the determining circumstances, as were Wesley's. There is supremely visible in them, so far as we are able to recover them, in their relation to the circumstances, what we may designate, for want of a better name, a deep, intense, and prophetic common-sense.

19. In fine, we conclude, that save in so far as they necessarily arose out of the life and essential nature of Christianity, that the forms of organization adopted in the Church were not ambitiously determined and laid down, either by our Saviour or His Apostles. Dr. Niedner has well said, in his Text-Book of Church History, that 'the property as well as the destination of the ethical religion of Jesus Christ, was to constitute in a religious spirit the whole human race into a moral

community (or common nature), to purify and hallow their imaginations and thoughts, their volitions and actions from sin and the consequences of sin; this was the only unconditioned prescription for the selection and application of even *all* the forms of the religious community. The care of the souls of the individual members was always essentially determined by this.' And again:—'The property and destination of the universal religion of Jesus Christ to be and become an instrument of salvation for all men, causes other and, at the same time, far *higher* demands to be made on the forms of the community than in the analogous forms of the Jewish or Heathen national religions. Even the external social forms, as the doctrine and practice, must accommodate itself through them—their comprehension and application—to the differences and vicissitudes of peoples and ages, forms of society, degrees of cultivation, &c., so as to penetrate through them all with its facts and powers, without at the same time losing itself in them<sup>1</sup>.' The same author also makes the following observations in relation to the difference between the forms, on the one hand, of Gentile, on the other, of Jewish Christianity:—'The next characteristic peculiarity of the connexion between the forms of the Church and those previously existing in the Jewish community, is not to be looked upon merely as a Judaizing, but at the same time, as a proof, through the fact itself, that not so high an importance was to be attached to the forms;—seeing that the one party attached themselves strictly, the others

<sup>1</sup> Niedner's Lehrbuch der Christlichen Kirchengeschichte, S. 152.

more loosely, to the Jewish forms which they found in existence <sup>1</sup>.'

20. We quote also a similar testimony from Dr. Gieseler, in his Ecclesiastical History, as to the free and unarbitrary development of the Christian Church as respects its external form, as opposed to a legislative moulding of it by the Apostles. 'But although the community did not separate itself from the religion of the Jews, yet they were more closely connected together by the peculiar direction which their religious feelings naturally took, and by their peculiar hopes. Thus there arose by degrees a regularly constituted society among the brethren. For this the Jewish synagogue presented itself as the most natural model. At first, the Apostles themselves performed the duties of the society, but by degrees special officers were appointed. The Apostles caused seven *distributors of alms* to be chosen <sup>2</sup>, inasmuch as the brethren showed very great liberality towards their poor, and because the administration of these gifts threatened to be detrimental to the proper calling and ministry of the twelve. Soon after this, we find *πρεσβύτεροι*, elders <sup>3</sup>, chosen not so much for the purpose of teaching, as for the management of common concerns, and for maintaining the ordinances of the Church. In all these appointments of the society, the Apostles did not act despotically, but allowed the Church to determine them <sup>4</sup>.' Dr. Gieseler has also the following statement, pp. 88-90:—'The new Churches out of Palestine formed themselves after the

<sup>1</sup> Lehrbuch der Christlichen Kirchengeschichte, S. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vi. 1-6.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xi. 30, *זקנים*.

<sup>4</sup> Gieseler's Ecclesiastical History, Clark's Translation, vol. i. pp. 69-70.

pattern of the mother Church in Jerusalem. Their presidents were *the elders* (πρεσβύτεροι, ἐπίσκοποι), officially of equal rank, although in many Churches individuals among them had a personal authority over the others.<sup>1</sup>

21. The same view is also entertained by Neander. He writes thus in his Church History:—‘Besides, Christianity freely appropriated to its own use such existing forms as were adapted to its spirit and essential character. Now in the Jewish synagogue, and in all the sects that sprang out of Judaism, there existed a form of government which was not monarchical, but aristocratical, consisting of a council of elders, זקנים, πρεσβύτεροι, who had the guidance of all affairs belonging to the common interest. To this form Christianity, which unfolded itself out of Judaism, would most naturally attach itself. The same polity, moreover, would appear most natural, whenever Churches were founded among the Pagans in any part of the Roman empire, for here men had long been accustomed to see the affairs of state administered by a senate or assembly of decuriones. It is, to my mind, an evidence of such an affinity between the ecclesiastical and the civil forms of administration, that, at a somewhat later period, the clergy were denominated *ordo*, the guiding senate of the community, since *ordo* stands pre-eminently for the *ordo senatorum* <sup>1</sup>.’

So much, then, as to the relation of the inward life of Christianity to the outward forms of organization in which it was embodied <sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Neander's Church History, vol. i. p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> See also Whately's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 251-253.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE CHURCH IN HER LIFE AND ESSENCE.

Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, (καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρὸς,) πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.

Ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο.—*John* i. 14, 17.

Οὐ γάρ εἰσι δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα, ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσφ αὐτῶν.—*Matt.* xviii. 20.

I. THE Church of Jesus Christ is the beginning of a new and higher society upon the earth. St. Paul tells us that ‘the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;’ ‘The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God;’ ‘The first Adam was of the earth, earthy; the second Adam is the Lord from heaven<sup>1</sup>.’

Whatever meaning we may attach to these words—whether we name them ‘mystical’ or not—I think there can be no doubt as to what they meant to the Apostle. He had before his mind’s eye a new creation, analogous to the first. True, it was not, as we believe the first creation to be, the calling into being for the first time of the plants and animals, rational and irrational, on the earth’s surface. It was the quickening and

<sup>1</sup> *Rom.* viii. 22, 19; *1 Cor.* xv. 47.

restoration to spiritual life of a race which had been already possessed of that life; yea, in some few persons of which, that life had always continued to exist. It cannot be held that the Old Testament saints were destitute of spiritual life. On the contrary, there is much in the records of the spiritual life of the Old Testament which may well put us to the blush.

2. But spiritual life also existed in Old Testament times—that life which it was the distinctive peculiarity of the New Testament dispensation to call into being. It may be asked, how far this was an anticipation of the New Testament dispensation? and whether there were any distinctive characteristics of the spiritual life of the Old Testament dispensation, as separating it from the New? We answer unquestionably there *was* an anticipation of the fuller life of the New Testament; as also that there are distinctive characteristics, marking off the one from the other. In the first place, the life was only existent to a very small extent, and in a state which only typified its full development. We have, in the geological periods which have passed over the earth's surface, the successive dynasties of the fish, the reptile, the mammal, and man. But it might be, and seems indeed to have been to some extent actually the case, that even during the dynasty of the fish, there were anticipations and premonitions in existing forms of the period and the dynasty which followed. So the scanty stream of spiritual life which flowed down from the first feeble spring of promise which started up at the feet of our first parents in the Proto-evangelion<sup>1</sup>, as they sadly turned their steps to quit the garden of Paradise, although it received

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 15.

accretions from time to time, as it flowed downwards through the ages, in the utterances of 'holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,' yet it never became, until the 'fulness of the time,' a 'river to swim in, a river so mighty as not to be passed over<sup>1</sup>.'

3. The life was only existent, we have said, to a very *small extent*. Through one family, and by the hands of comparatively a small number of persons, was the lamp of life handed down from age to age, until the dawning of the Gospel day. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, were, on the whole, *solitary* men—lone stars on the bosom of night. So scanty had the rill become under the drying influences of the prevalent Pharisaism, that when the Only-Begotten came into the world, only a very few, only a Simeon and Anna, were waiting to receive Him.

4. The life was, moreover, *immature* and *imperfect*. It was the typical representation of the powers of an endless life yet to be revealed. The Saviour has told us 'that among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he<sup>2</sup>.' This was, as we learn from the corresponding passage in St. Luke's Gospel, because of his position as a prophet. He was the morning star of the prophetic constellations which had shone during the dark night of the period preceding the dawning of the Sun of Righteousness; and bathed as he was in the lustre of the rising orb of day, the last of the men by whom, 'at sundry times and in divers manners, God spake,' both in virtue of the illumination, in the midst

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xlvii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xi. 11; Luke vii. 28.



of which he shone, and his nearness to the Saviour, he was the greatest of them all.

5. This anticipatory spiritual life was, moreover, defective in this wise—it had not received the promises. The groundwork of the promise was revealed, that there *was to be* a scheme of redemption, but the nature and method of it remained entirely hid. A future Deliverer was to come, spoken of under different figures and symbols, but it was not anticipated save in the enigmatical predictions of the prophets—predictions which, we learn, even themselves did not understand<sup>1</sup> as to what particular nature and form the great salvation was to assume. The *fact* was revealed as about to take place; the *nature* and *method* of the fact remained undiscovered.

The Jew was thus invited to believe in a provision for his salvation, whose method was as yet unrevealed; and there may have been salvation for many of the Gentiles upon the same ground, namely, belief that God would in His providence supply in due time a propitiation, whose character and form nevertheless remained as yet unknown.

6. The spiritual life of this period was, moreover, as has been already noticed, *typical* in its character: that is, to say, it was prophecy rather than fulfilment, shadow rather than substance. In manifold form the Old Testament Israel was a type of the universal Israel of God. It is on this ground that we interpret, and excuse the imperfections, moral and spiritual, of the dispensation.

The work of revelation is progressive. It was at first addressed to men in a comparatively weak and

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Pet. i. 11.

childish state. Their sense of responsibility or their relation to God was undeveloped, and consequently their sense of sin, as necessarily arising from their consciousness of responsibility, was also undeveloped.

7. Aristotle has said in reference to tragic poetry, that terror purifies the passions. Now, the Old Testament dispensation was especially marked by the terrible judgments, the agonies through fear, to which the human spirit was liable. The flood, the destruction of the cities of the plain, the plagues of Egypt, the frequent and bloody wars, the famines and pestilences, all mark out the period by their deeply-scored lines of relentless suffering. The purpose of this was, as we believe, to awaken man, through suffering, to a sense of his responsibility to God, and of his transgressions against God. Thus, as the ages rolled, he might be instructed by terror, and prepared for the reception of the Gospel of love. There is, moreover, a striking coincidence here with God's treatment of the individual sinner. It is by trials and afflictions that multitudes are brought to know themselves and seek after God. Fear is greatly used in dealing with sinners during the first stages of conviction. They are brought to desire to 'flee from the wrath to come.' The same great principle appears to have been acted upon by God in the first stage of His dealings with the world.

8. The Almighty has acted, as every wise human legislator must act, upon the level occupied by the persons for whom the legislation is intended. Were one who had to legislate for some savage tribe to adopt the cumbrous systems of law in use among civilized nations, he would assuredly not only be a bad legislator, but, in addition, his laws would not be obeyed. It is

system of law would have to be adapted to the character of the people. The Divine Legislator acts upon the same principle. He permitted social forms, customs, and laws to exist—or even prescribed them—to the chosen people, which in a different and higher state of society would not only be unsuitable but pernicious. Thus the laws of polygamy and divorce were sanctioned by the Mosaic legislation, because, as our Saviour informs us, of the ‘hardness of heart’ of the people<sup>1</sup> for whom they were prescribed.

9. This typical character of the dispensation is not only seen in the relation of Judaism to Christianity; it is also visible in the relation of Judaism itself to Mosaism, as we may name the Mosaic institutes in the first stage of their development.

We find a distinction between these two periods in the history of Israel, made in reference to their sacred writings. The Scriptural names for the sacred literature of the two periods is the Law and the Prophets, and each of the periods designated by these have a distinctive character and relation to the other. The House of God, for example, in the first stage, a Tabernacle suited to the worship of a nomadic people, becomes, in the second, a Temple fitted to the life of a people stationary and agricultural. The spiritual character, moreover, of the dispensation in the later stage of it is greatly deepened and intensified. The worship of God by means of the Synagogue was an important step in advance in the development of the Jewish people. This has been traced to the period of the Babylonish

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 6–8. This completely meets the difficulty raised by Bishop Colenso as to the morality of the law regarding assaults upon slaves, as found in the Pentateuch.

Captivity; but although it may appear first at this time in its full development, yet it came into being by degrees. Such institutions never spring instantaneously into being<sup>1</sup>.

10. This institution was greatly beneficial in promoting and increasing the spirituality of the Jewish dispensation. The fruits of the growth and development of this institution—unquestionably the precursor of the Christian Church—are seen in the fact that, after the institution came into full play, the Jews never again relapsed into idolatry. Indeed, so far as the vitality of the institutions was concerned, it may be held that the service of the Synagogue superseded that of the Temple. The latter was found at the time of our Saviour in a highly artificial and formal condition, presided over by wicked Sadducean High Priests installed by Roman authority; while the former was, over all the land, doing a great work in the training and instruction of the people in the Word and service of Jehovah. It is interesting to note that the Synagogue was honoured to be the training school both of our Lord and His disciples, while it was freely turned to use by them in the proclamation of the Gospel. When the Apostle of the Gentiles was, moreover, engaged on his missionary journeys, he was wont, first of all, to make the synagogues the sphere of his preachings, wherever they existed in the Gentile cities. Nor did he cease from proclaiming the Gospel in them until he was driven out by force.

11. We are thus made to perceive how the sensuous gives place to the ethical and the intellectual, and these

<sup>1</sup> See Bernard's *Vitringa De Synagogâ*, or the Synagogue and the Church, Part I. chap. iv.

in turn give place to the spiritual. Doubtless the services of the Tabernacle and Temple were well fitted to teach, by their storied preachments and gorgeous symbolism, a rude and uninformed people; but when they had served their purpose, they gave way to a more intellectual method of instruction—one which appealed less to the senses and the imagination, and more to the rational and ethical nature. The sensuous symbol typifies the intellectual doctrine, and this again is transmuted into the spiritual fact or idea.

12. So much then for the general character of the Jewish dispensation. As a whole, it was a type of the Christian Church. It had its congregation, its priests, its prophets and rulers. It had, moreover, its symbolical services, passing gradually over into the system of lay instruction which we find in the Synagogue.

The name which the dispensation bears in relation to its sacred writings, is, as already noticed, the Law and the Prophets. This is very significant. The Law is the true object and aim of the dispensation. The Prophets, again, form the middle term between the Law and the Gospel. In this middle term, moreover, we find the character reflected of both the extremes—the sternness and co-active force of the Law, and at the same time the gentleness and spiritual power of the Gospel. How marked is the latter, for example, in the evangelic strains of Isaiah!

13. As to the *object* or *design* of the Law, this is stated in the sacred record with sufficient clearness. ‘The LAW,’ says the Evangelist John, ‘came by Moses, GRACE and TRUTH by Jesus Christ.’ The revelation of the DIVINE LAW, as a searching, all-pervading pursuit,

apprehension, and discovery of SIN, was the great aim of the dispensation.

14. The law of God, originally written on the fleshly tablets of the human heart, as the law of man's own nature, had been in great part obliterated and defaced by the Fall. Conscience, imperfectly enlightened, and possessing but scanty power as a moral spring—depraved, in addition, by false and superstitious beliefs—threatened to become extinct in the human breast, and thus leave without moral regulation man's character and conduct. In these circumstances, the heads of the moral law in its simplest form were, after due preparation, graven by the finger of God upon the tables of stone—part of the imperishable rock of Sinai. Broken, they were again restored, but this time by the hand of a mediator, typical of the future Mediator, the Surety of the Covenant of Grace. Man was to be himself—*typically* by Moses, and *really* in the God-man—the instrument of the great salvation. The first Table, like the first Covenant, was not to stand; the second Table, with its prophetically restored handwriting, was more permanent, as the second Covenant in the hand of the Prophet like unto Moses<sup>1</sup>, whom the Lord was to raise up, was more enduring.

15. And thus the ethical law of man's own nature was brought before him, graven on the rock, to be a witness against him. Then ensued the mysterious conflict described by Paul in the seventh of Romans. The 'law in the members' is found 'warring against the law of the mind' (the law of conscience), and 'bringing the man into captivity' to the 'law of sin which is in his members.'

<sup>1</sup> See Deut. xviii. 15–19, compared with Acts iii. 22, 23.

It is said that listening to music will sometimes drive into frantic fury those unhappy creatures who have the misfortune to be born idiotic, and the interpretation put upon the fact has been that the heaven-born melody has a wondrous power of unveiling the secrets of the inner being, and revealing, in contrast to its own harmony, the gloomy discord and dark disorder which has clouded the nature of such unfortunates, even to the sufferer himself.

Such, in effect, was also the result of the Sinaitic institute. It revealed to the man those lines of moral and spiritual duty originally given as *data* of the human consciousness, but blurred and obliterated by his fall.

16. The commandments are held out before the man as a law of constraint *without* him; nevertheless they serve as a law of felt obligation *within*; inasmuch as they awaken by reminiscence the force of the law within, as of binding obligation. There is a law thus without the man, with its *shalts* and *shalt nots*, from which the man would fain escape; but he is still held in bondage to the law, however irksome, by a sense of the fact that it is obligatory upon him. The law reveals to him his former and corrupt self, the meanwhile threatening retribution, and discovering the terrific force of that 'law of sin and death' under which he is held in bondage. Thus at length the man is compelled to cry out, as he feels his thralldom to the 'law of sin' in his members, and is threatened at the same time by the 'law of commandments contained in ordinances,' finding also an echo in his own breast: 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Hence the externally-given Law became a schoolmaster (*pædagogus*) to lead the sinner to the Gospel.

17. Such being the functions of the Law, the impression of which upon the minds of men, as a principle of authority and constraint, and yet at the same time as a principle which man must necessarily recognise as obligatory because the very foundation of his own moral and spiritual being—a record written on his heart<sup>1</sup>—was the special object or aim of the Jewish dispensation. Such being the case, the impression of being under the *Law*, being the design of Judaism, it might naturally be expected that the form or organization of the Jewish economy would necessarily differ from the Christian by its relation to this very central fact of the system. That it did so differ is evident, we might say, from every page of the New Testament. The Jewish economy was *legal*: this is alike its glory and its reproach;—its glory as a convicting power preparatory to the Gospel; its reproach when, as in the case of the Galatian Churches, it sought to thrust itself back upon the ground of the Gospel. As a system its powers were political rather than ethical, and its very failure arose from the attempt to do the work of an ethical and spiritual system by external and co-active commands. It said merely ‘*Thou shalt*’ and ‘*Thou shalt not* ;’ and thus presented the bare representation of *law commanding* as the spring upon the moral nature, coupled, no doubt, with motives drawn from self-interest as to the result. Hence alone its power to convince of sin; but again, in the very presence of that sin which it unearthed from its den in the human heart, displaying its native repulsiveness, it was found to be weak through the ‘flesh.’ The ‘fleshly mind,’ it was demonstrated, ‘was not subject to the law of God, neither indeed could be,’

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii. 14, 15.



for it was 'enmity against God,' being based upon, and seeking as its aim, the worship and pleasuring of self in the room of God. How abundantly this is demonstrated in the Israelitish history need not be shown here. The story of the numberless rebellions and apostasies of the chosen people in the face of equally numerous judgments and penalties, reads like a satire upon human nature—if we do not understand the law under which they were placed—as being intended to show by its very failure the need of some better covenant.

18. There were prophecies of a remedial economy to be found in the ceremonial law and the Temple service generally, but even here the same defect meets us, viz. the presence of *formal* and *external* validity without corresponding inward spiritual worth. The longing devout soul was thus compelled to cry out, as it was burdened by an anguished sense of its own sinfulness, and the desire of deliverance from that sinfulness,—  
'For Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it Thee; Thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of the Lord are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart Thou wilt not despise<sup>1</sup>.'

19. If the Temple service thus failed to satisfy the devout soul longing after a closer union with God in the Mosaic period, the service of the Synagogue, which seems to us to be a special outward expression of the religious life of the prophetic period, equally failed to fulfil the desires of such longing hearts, and ran moreover to seed as it became incrustated with the hard and indurated *formalism* which was so strongly reprobated by our Saviour, and which, we fear, is still characteristic of it as existent to the present day amongst the children of Abraham.

<sup>1</sup> Psalm li. 16, 17.

20. There was no doubt present, side by side with these imperfect and preparatory forms, as shown by Paul, also a stream of really vital spiritual power in the Jewish economy, viz. in the life of faith descending from that principle (*i.e.* faith), as underlying the whole dispensation. 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness<sup>1</sup>.' This principle, where it existed, could however find nourishment both in the services of the Temple and those of the Synagogue, as typical prophecies of some better thing yet to be revealed.

21. But the whole was confined under the ancient dispensation within narrow limits, as young plants are trained in a nursery before they are transplanted on the hill-side to brave the cutting frosts and bleak winter storms. This indeed is the glory of the Israelitish people, that as a 'garden walled round' they enclosed those germs of spiritual life which, when the fulness of the time was come, were to be transferred to the wider field of the world. Hence the Apostle who most disputed their claims to be custodiers of the new life after the time for its retention was passed, could willingly allow the dignity of their mission and the advantages it conferred. 'Theirs were the lively oracles of God.' 'Theirs were the fathers, and of them Christ came, who is over all, blessed for ever.'

22. The prophets, moreover, paved the way for the world-wide revelation, and sowed broadcast the seeds of spiritual life by their anticipations of the Messiah. In Him was to be concentrated all that was worthiest, purest, and noblest in the Law and the Prophets. He was to gather it up, as it were, again into His own

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xv. 6.

person, that it might go forth stamped afresh with the legislative authority of a Moses<sup>1</sup>; yea, One whose mission and dignity rose unspeakably above that of Moses, as a son's above that of a servant, for He was the God-man Himself.

23. Scripture itself declares, that while the 'Law was given by Moses,' grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The dark night of the world's history passed. The twinkling stars of patriarchal wisdom and heathen philosophy had cast abroad their feeble illumination; the moon of Judaism, passing through its various phases, had also shone upon the world. God, 'at sundry times and in divers manners,' had revealed the truth 'to the fathers by the prophets.' And they themselves 'had searched diligently what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when He testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow<sup>2</sup>.' At length the destined moment arrived for which both Gentile philosophy and Jewish religion had prepared the world, even through their very failure as powers unto righteousness. 'The Word became flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth<sup>3</sup>.'

24. What, then, was the significance of this new beginning, this step upwards to a higher platform in the development of humanity? It was, it has been already said, a 'new creation.' So much is affirmed in Scripture. But how can that be called *new* which had been confessedly in existence for centuries? It must

<sup>1</sup> See *Ecce Homo*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 11.

<sup>3</sup> John i. 14.

be admitted that both under the Law and the Prophets we find true spiritual life, and that in no mean degree of intensity and development. The life of faith was no new thing, as is abundantly evidenced upon every page of the Book of Psalms, under the ancient dispensation. But was not the life of faith even then connected with Christ? The rays of the dawning sun illuminate the mountains before they fall upon the plains; and so the healing rays of the Sun of Righteousness were cast upon the mountains of Judaism before they reached the broad plain of the great masses of humanity. Some divines have maintained, with a fair show of reason, that Christ was the Angel of the Covenant, whose mysterious presence we encounter in the patriarchal and Mosaic revelations<sup>1</sup>.

25. Be this as it may, it was the one *unique* faith which saved the Old Testament believer, as it saves the New. True, the Old Testament believer had not 'received the promises,' but, nevertheless, they saw them afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them, and lived as pilgrims and strangers in the earth<sup>2</sup>.

26. It has been said by Baron Bunsen, as to this point, 'None of the ancient religions could solve the enigma of the human heart; the contest between the unyielding moral law, which demanded perfect holiness, and the actual life and actions, which displayed to the conscience imperfection and apostasy, remained unsettled, unreconciled. The thinker indeed retired, led by the Spirit of God, into his own breast, and contemplated the riddle, but without solving it;—the conflict, but without being able to reconcile the

<sup>1</sup> See Liddon's Bampton Lectures, Lect. II.    <sup>2</sup> Heb. xi. 13.

parties. Humanity was defective in insight because it was wanting in power. The pious and God-fearing, however, lived in faith and hope. They performed and honoured the external works of the religion of their people, as part of their public duties and honours as citizens, and, at the same time, as the symbol of something whose actuality and reality they were as little at liberty to deny as to utter and affirm<sup>1</sup>.

27. But, as already noticed, this life occupied a very narrow circle. It was 'cabined, cribbed, confined' within the precincts of Judaism, a narrow and diminutive system, at least so far as its bulk in the eyes of the nations was concerned. Doubtless there were some saved by the *one faith*, even amongst the Gentiles, of those who felt their need of being purged from sin, and died trusting that while they knew of no atonement, yet a provision would be made for their justification in the good providence of God.

May we not say that Judaism was thus like a seed, within whose kernel the vital germ lies of the life to be universally developed by Christianity?

28. In the Saviour's coming the outer shell is, however, broken, and preparation made to sow the inclosed seed. Christ was Himself the revelation of the new life. And this, not indeed in its perfected form; this, in its beauty, was only unveiled at His resurrection.

29. To mankind dwelling in *darkness* and *fear*, in lieu of that primitive *light* and *love* which had originally shone down upon him from the 'excellent glory,' the 'message' came in Christ's person, His demeanour, His acts and teachings, His life, death, and resurrec-

<sup>1</sup> Bunsen's Kirche der Zukunft, S. 65; German edition.

tion, that God was ‘light, and in Him was no darkness at all<sup>1</sup>.’ Man, in the darkness of superstition, the counterpart to faith, in his fallen state had imaged God to be such an one as himself; yea, in addition, had not only worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, but had also, in the agony of his apprehensions, served the evil one, as we still find him doing in the devil-worship of India and other places. To destroy these false impressions of God, the true character of the Father was revealed in Jesus Christ, as the God of light and holiness and love. ‘No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him<sup>2</sup>.’

There was no longer any pretext for the reception and retention of false and perverted views of the Divine character and attributes, such as the terror-stricken natural conscience is only too ready to embrace.

30. As the Prophet or Revealer of the Father, the Lord Jesus discovers the truth. In the moral and spiritual darkness of humanity there were false and monstrous views abroad as to every aspect of the Divine character, and every relation of man to the unseen and eternal. Deceived as to his own state, he is equally in error as to his relation to God, his duties to God, and the means needful for his deliverance.

In these circumstances, the truth as revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ bears, in the first place, upon the Divine character as reflected in Him—light in which there is no darkness at all. But light is the medium by which the *true*, the real, is made manifest; and thus to man his own sinfulness and wretchedness were made

<sup>1</sup> 1 John i. 5.

<sup>2</sup> John i. 18.

known. The whole region of the unseen and the eternal was unfolded to man in its truth and reality, so that when brought under the influence of the revelation, he has that faith which is a 'conviction of things not seen'.<sup>1</sup> The unveiling or manifestation of the unseen, the world of spiritual and eternal realities, cannot but awaken man to terrible alarm and fear. God is no longer to him a vague hearsay or tradition, such as He seemed to be aforesaid. He is now the only living One, whose all-surrounding presence is felt. Hence the convicted sinner must cry out, 'Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether'.<sup>2</sup>

31. Hence it is not enough for man to know and learn the truth as to how matters stand with him in relation to God and eternal things. The truth in this aspect of it only reveals the desperate condition to which sin has brought man. There is therefore needful a further discovery of the goodness of God, namely, in GRACE.

32. This is then the *active* work of salvation. The truth is, as we have seen, the discoverer of man's real condition in relation to God. But to do nothing save discover the reality to man were not enough—nay, it were only to sink him into hopeless despair. By the truth he may be led to desire deliverance. He may thus know *that* God is, and *what* God is.

But knowing what God is—that He is not only light

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm cxxxix. 1-4.

but love—there will be awakened an expectation that the God who is love will in His infinite wisdom find a way of escape for man from his evil situation and his evil self. Thus the revelation of the truth naturally passes over into, or at least to the expectation of, the longing for, the manifestation of grace.

This, then, is the work of redemption—as a scheme, a labour, a world fact. It reveals Jesus as the remedy for all the evils under which humanity was suffering. For the burden of guilt there is a sacrifice: ‘He bore our sins in His own body on the tree<sup>1</sup>.’ For the power of sin in the soul, there is a counterworking power, destined to destroy it: ‘The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes free from the law of sin and death<sup>2</sup>.’ And for the weakness and helplessness of our earthly life there is strength: ‘His strength is made perfect in weakness<sup>3</sup>.’

For our unwisdom, moreover, there is guidance; for our ignorance there is knowledge; and for our sufferings there is glory. All those things, and more than all, we have in the Lord Jesus Christ, ‘for He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption<sup>4</sup>.’ From the truth, moreover, we learn wisdom as to the way—how we really stand related to the world that now is and the world to come, to God and our fellow men, so as to suffer no longer under those delusions and that ignorance which cloud and darken the mind of the natural man<sup>5</sup>. From the truth we learn our need of a righteousness we are not ourselves possessed of, and this we obtain through the Lord

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 9.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. i. 30.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 14.



Jesus, who is 'made sin,' that we may become righteousness. So sanctification, deliverance from the presence and power of indwelling sin, comes to the sinner when he is able to throw himself unreservedly upon the Lord Jesus Christ as his deliverer. 'He is called Jesus because He saves His people from their sins.' Finally, He is made unto us redemption. The work He has begun He will carry on to the end. Set free from guilt, He will also make us holy. Now 'children' and 'heirs,' 'it doth not yet appear what we shall be;' 'but when He appears, we shall also appear with Him in glory<sup>1</sup>.'

33. What, however, it may be asked, is the ultimate aim, the *terminus ad quem*, of the whole? This is so well expressed by the Apostle John in the opening verses of his First Epistle, that, at the risk of repetition, we will refer to it again. He tells us, 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life, declare we unto you . . . that ye may have FELLOWSHIP with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.' Here then is the ultimate aim of the revelation and manifestation—the Epiphany of Christ in all its stages. The end of the whole is a fellowship. The Apostle is at pains to reiterate, as it were, every aspect in which the Divine Saviour appeared to him, and every fact and inference in relation to this which he could recall from his apostolic experience and recollection, so that he may bring them to bear upon the life of those to whom he was writing, so as to draw them into the life of Christ. Thus truth

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 2; Coloss. iii. 4.

and grace naturally pass into life, that life of which the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, is the embodiment.

34. The life of the believer, then, is life *in, by, and with* Christ, purified by His blood, sustained by His power, exalted by fellowship with Him, developed by His manifestation, and destined to increase ever more in likeness to Him, as seeing Him as He is<sup>1</sup>.

It is, however, difficult to speak of this life with any degree of exactness, just from the fact already stated, that it is a *process becoming* and not a *fact realized*. 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be.' Our life is hid with Christ in the bosom of the Father, and is only fully to be discovered when the glorious pattern of the life comes again in His splendour. The present time, or dispensation of the Spirit, as it is Scripturally named, is, so far as we learn in the New Testament, an inchoate period. Souls are raised from the dead to 'newness of life;' but they have still to wait and long for the adoption, viz. the redemption of the body.

35. Not only is our spiritual being to be created anew after the image of Him who created it, in 'knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness;' but the body of our humiliation is to be transformed after the likeness of the body of His glory<sup>2</sup>. This being so, we can only now perceive the work in partial completion. The REDEEMED MAN is only visible in Jesus the Pattern, or such other of the firstfruits that were raised together with Him. We live during a period of resurrection work, during which the Spirit of God is engaged with and through the Church and by the Word in raising souls from their graves; and when

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii. 21.

this is complete, then the work of clothing them with redeemed Christ-like bodies will begin, and then the 'great race that is to be,' 'the sons of God,' for the manifestation of whom the earnest expectation of the creature now waiteth, will appear<sup>1</sup>.

36. Meanwhile the life, though incomplete, is the highest and noblest form of visible and social existence. If it be the glory of the higher creatures in the scale of being, that they are not confined, in the operations of consciousness and the apprehension of being, to the present and the now, but are able to extend their being far backwards in the past and forwards into the future, to reach widely beyond the limits of bodily form in space and time, then surely that life whose consciousness relates us to the unseen and the eternal is the highest of all. And this is the triumph of the faith faculty, whose powers and conditions philosophy has as yet done so little to investigate or inquire into. *That* however the *apprehension* of the unseen and eternal is a fact, the *ὅτι*, the *that* of which is abundantly manifest from the annals of Christian experience, needs surely here nothing more than simple affirmation; though the *διότι*, the *now*, be as yet comparatively uninvestigated and unknown.

37. That there is in human nature a capacity of apprehending the invisible, and of even *loving*, beings who tenant the unseen, is surely very remarkable in the natural history creature, however it may be sought to be explained away on the pretext of enthusiasm, phantasy, &c.

Yet surely the results are anything but fantastic. To say nothing of the internal phenomena of the life,—the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 19, 22, 23.

eye apprehending the unseen and eternal, the joyful moods and flights of the spirit while tasting of the peace which passes understanding and the joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, the affections which may be enjoyfully anchored upon objects beyond the ken of the merely 'natural' man,—we have but to look upon the type of character of which a true and living Christianity, even by confession of its adversaries, has been fruitful, to satisfy ourselves that phantasy could never produce aught so healthy and so real.

Yet does not such a consciousness as that, the expression of which we find in the fifty-first and hundred and thirty-ninth Psalms, to select two out of many examples, stand altogether unique and singular in the whole circle of human literature?

38. We may be pointed, perhaps, to the Vedic Hymns, the Gâthas of Zoroaster, or Buddhist oracles as a reply to this argument; but we submit, the difference betwixt the experimental life found in the Christian Scriptures and the fanciful utterances of these Pantheistic or semi-Pantheistic oracles, is marked by all the distance between a true apprehension of and life in God, and the wailings of the human spirit after Him while surrounded by darkness and struggling with thick enveloping clouds of error. And as systems must be tried by their results, their 'fruits,' so we may contrast the, on the whole, healthy, all-conquering life of modern Christendom, with all its faults and weaknesses, with the civilizations which have been the outcome of these systems.

39. This life then, the life of the believer in Christ, or of Christ in the believer, with its potent forces enabling the man—with all the ponderous tendencies

dragging his spirit downward to the sensuous, the materialistic, or at highest the merely intellectual—to rise above them all, and ‘beholding as with open face in a glass’ the glory of his risen Lord, to be ‘changed into the same image from glory to glory,’ is the life which finds expression in the Church.

As love to his risen Redeemer, and of God through the Redeemer, is the central and moving power of this life, so it must needs extend to all intelligent creatures around him who feels this love. ‘He who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him<sup>1</sup>,’ and therefore the mind of God is reflected in him. But it was the ‘mind of Jesus’ to have ‘compassion on the ignorant and those that are out of the way.’ It must therefore of necessity be also the mind of the believer in Christ who desires the conquest of the world to Christ. Hence the absolute necessity of the Communion of Saints, both to retain the life already bestowed, and to impart it to others. Without such a communion, the individuals who should go to make it up would be under no common law, and therefore their efforts would not only be vain and nugatory, but being in a state of nature, one to other, these would necessarily be as much hostile as friendly to each other. The state of man politically, before he enters into any organized community, is in point of fact a state of hostility, if not open war; and the same must obtain of men under spiritual lawlessness, whatever good dispositions may exist in their hearts.

40. The HOLY SPIRIT of God immanent in the Church, and using the WORD—that sword given both for offence and defence—acts through the Church organ-

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 16.

ized and equipped for her work, to the fulfilment of the great purpose of redemption. Preservation of souls already gained, and growth in the spiritual life, as also the continual conquest of new myriads of souls,—this is the object and aim of Christianity; and this necessarily presupposes the existence of a commonwealth ethical and spiritual in its nature.

Such a life must desire the highest order as the fittest concomitant of its harmonious exercise, and such order could not exist without such a spiritual kingdom; and it may also be added, without endeavours to express provisionally this divine ideal by suitable visible forms and organizations.

41. These, again, must of necessity reflect the varied character and tendencies of the human spirit striving after an ideal, which under different forms of culture, original diversities of character, and the manifold changes of external circumstances, will necessarily assume varied and even seemingly conflicting forms.

Nevertheless, under 'diversities of operation' the Apostle assures us there was in the apostolic Church 'the same Spirit.' So may we, sympathizing with the frailty common to us all, recognise in the CHURCHES the same Spirit, leading them on, with all their weaknesses, infirmities, and even intolerances, in their search after the CHURCH which at last shall descend out of heaven from God, 'having the glory of God, and her light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal'.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxi. 11.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE CONDITIONS OF CHURCH LIFE.

‘Quum itaque de aliquo nascatur aliquid etiam non eo modo, ut sit filius, nec rursus omnis, qui dicitur filius, de illo sit natus, cujus dicitur filius; profecto modus iste, quo natus est Christus de Spiritu Sancto non sicut filius, et de Maria virgine sicut filius, insinuat nobis gratiam Dei, qua homo, nullis præcedentibus meritis, in ipso exordio naturæ suæ quo esse cœpit, Verbo Dei, copularetur in tantam personæ unitatem, ut idem ipse esset filius Dei, qui filius hominis, et filius hominis qui filius Dei, ac sic in naturæ humanæ susceptione fieret quodam modo ipsa gratia illi homini naturalis, quæ nullum peccatum posset admittere.’—AUGUSTINE, *Enchiridion ad Laurent.*, c. 40.

‘Οσοι γὰρ Πνεύματι Θεοῦ ἄγονται, οὗτοί εἰσιν υἱοὶ Θεοῦ.—*Rom.* viii. 14.

Τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, ὃ ὁ κόσμος οὐ δύναται λαβεῖν, ὅτι οὐ θεωρεῖ αὐτὸ, οὐδὲ γινώσκει αὐτό· ὑμεῖς δὲ γινώσκετε αὐτὸ, ὅτι παρ’ ὑμῖν μένει, καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔσται.—*John* xiv. 17.

Ζῶν γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐνεργῆς, καὶ τομώτερος ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν μάχαιραν δίστομον, καὶ διϊκνούμενος ἄχρι μερισμοῦ ψυχῆς τε καὶ πνεύματος, ἁρμῶν τε καὶ μυελῶν, καὶ κριτικὸς ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας.—*Heb.* iv. 12.

‘Αγίασον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ σου· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστι.—*John* xvii. 17.

1. In the maintenance, growth, and propagation of the life of Christ in the world, it would seem necessary that we should be able to point to certain universal conditions or principles which remain unaltered by the process of time. If the matter were left to man himself, and to the mere results of abstract truth upon his mind,

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there was every reason to fear that he would depart from that truth through the weakness and vacillation of his nature.

2. Such conditions or principles must of necessity have a relation to the two-fold state of mankind, as living spirit tenanting the invisible, and material form dwelling in the visible.

3. Part of the consequences of the Fall was, a declining of man from the internal and spiritual life which originally belonged to him, upon the merely animal and physical which formed the external conditions of his existence. The two poles of his compound being were pointed, the one towards the unseen and eternal, in virtue of that God-breathed, living spirit which dwelt within, while the other was turned to the tangible and material to which he belonged through his bodily nature.

4. But filled with horror from that darkness and fear which clouded the invisible after his departure from God, he threw himself in consequence, with all the force of his being, upon the pole of his merely outward nature related to the material. He did not 'like to retain God in his knowledge,' and consequently 'he changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator<sup>1</sup>.'

With conscience, the internal witness for God in his bosom, which he could not altogether silence or eradicate, he yet strove to find his God on that material side of his nature towards which the whole forces of his being had been precipitated. Hence, amid the darkness of superstition, and oppressed by the fear which hung like a thunder-cloud over the natural conscience,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 28, 25, 23.



he could not cease to worship; but he nevertheless sought to worship in accordance with the earthly and sensual bias which ruled his nature. He thus 'changed the glory of the incorruptible into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things<sup>1</sup>.'

5. To restore his nature to its proper balance, and bring the forces of his being back from the material poles of his nature on which they had been thrown, which now had become, as it were, the centre of gravity to his whole being, man, unless a mighty miracle of destruction and reconstruction were wrought, must be dealt with as he *now is*.

6. Hence the wondrous central fact of redemption, that when man had ceased to seek God, God sought him. 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' This wondrous act of condescension and love is still more emphasized and applied to man's conscience and affections by the work of redemption, in its manifold provision for all the guilt, want, infirmity, sin, and wretchedness of his nature. The eye in man's spirit which beholds the invisible purged from its cataract, and the paralysis which benumbed the nerve of sight removed, man, as a consequence of this quickening<sup>2</sup>, is able in some feeble measure to look not merely at the 'seen and temporal,' but also at the 'unseen and eternal<sup>3</sup>.' In the growth of the new life within him he is, moreover, enabled evermore to grow in this faculty: 'he beholds as with open face in a glass the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 1,

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 18.

glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image from glory to glory by the Lord the Spirit<sup>1</sup>.

7. It was not, however, *expedient*<sup>2</sup> that the revealed God should remain at this material side of man's nature, whither He had come to wrench man's perverted nature back. He must be lifted up as a spiritual magnet, in order that He might draw all men unto Him—draw them back to the proper balance of their nature, between the material and spiritual, to its due and normal relation to God<sup>3</sup>.

8. The work was however, in the wisdom of God, to be a *process* rather than an *act*. The germ of spiritual life implanted in man's nature was to grow and develop till the whole of humanity was brought under its power.

9. Hence the necessity of the permanent conditions already referred to. Christ returned in His own person to the Father, to whom also, in process of time, a regenerated humanity was to be brought; but He left His spiritual power and authority represented by powers which, though joined to Himself, yet dwell with man, and act upon him both *externally* and *internally*. These representatives of the ascended Saviour are with man the WORD WRITTEN, and the HOLY SPIRIT. These represent to the widowed Church her risen Lord, until she be reunited to Him at His second coming: after which, where He is 'she shall be also'<sup>4</sup>.

The Holy Spirit is the invisible representative of Christ, whose spirit He is named, as well as that of the Father<sup>5</sup>. Dwelling in the human nature which Christ

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> John xvi. 7. συμφέρει ὑμῖν.

<sup>3</sup> John xiii. 32.

<sup>4</sup> John xiv. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii. 9; 1 Peter i. 11; John xiv. 16.

joined to His Godhead in His own person, thus restoring the balance of man's nature, and virtually redeeming humanity,—dwelling in Christ, we say, without 'measure<sup>1</sup>,'—the Holy Spirit also extends His influence to the far remote of man's fallen and corrupt nature, and 'convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment;' brooding, as in the beginning, over the material world—over the great deep of humanity, chaotic and dark from its perversion and fall. It is His, therefore, to preside over the successive steps of the new creation; to quicken the man to a sense of his sin and danger, by saying, 'Let there be light<sup>2</sup>;' to call forth, moreover, the first sprouts of spiritual life; to reveal the truth of God, until the babe in Christ become a perfect man reaching unto the measure of the fulness of Christ<sup>3</sup>.

This, then, is the inward principle, the invisible condition of the Church's life.

10. As already noticed, however, the Church has a mission to propagate, as well as to maintain and strengthen the faith; but she must do this by fulfilling her mission in the world—by crying with the Spirit, 'Come<sup>4</sup>!'

Here, however, she has to do with the cardinal vice of *humanity*—its materialistic tendency; and hence she must have a visible as well as an invisible representative of her absent Lord. Such a representative then she possesses in the WORD, embodied in writing, as the Eternal Word was incarnated in flesh.

11. As Christ, moreover, was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world<sup>5</sup>, so the Spirit has been manifested also before the fulness of the time. He

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. i. 2, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. iv. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xxii. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xiii. 8.

spake in the prophets, in those enigmatical forms which they themselves searched diligently to know what the 'Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify'<sup>1</sup>. But His spoken utterances, preserved by the good providence of God, became the Word, now the Law, to hold up the violated moral law of man's own being penally against him, till he should recognise his own departure from truth, and duty, and obedience. Next, his utterances were received by the PROPHETS to expound, simplify, and enforce the Law, as well as give promise that a time would speedily come when that 'weakness of the Law,' through the flesh<sup>2</sup>, would be remedied by God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to supply those motives and powers without which the Law was 'weak.'

Finally, He spake of the Word made flesh, and revealed His glory by Evangelists, Apostles, and Prophets, speaking of that which they had seen and heard, seen with their eyes and looked upon, and their hands had handled of the Word of life<sup>3</sup>. Thus the inspired volume, the Word written, grew to completeness, and now, by the grace of God, lies upon every altar in Christendom, the visible representative of the truth of God.

12. It is here moreover, we conceive, in connexion with the Word written, that we ought to take account of the sacraments. There is often, in particular circumstances, a greater power in symbols appealing to the mind through the eyes, than there is in ideas spoken to or conveyed to the mind through the ear. In certain stages of human progress, and states of human feeling, their power may be very much greater.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter i. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John i. 1, 2.

It is upon this, we believe, that the abundant use of symbolism in the Mosaic economy depended. They were better fitted for the instruction of the Israelites in the particular stage of progress, moral and spiritual, through which they were then passing. They appealed powerfully to the imagination in a people in which imagination was strong and the power of inference and reasoning weak.

13. And although the gorgeous symbolism and storied preachments of the Mosaic dispensation were done away at the fulness of the time, as no longer called for, nay, as calculated to be a positive hindrance in the advanced stage of moral and spiritual culture to which the human race had advanced, yet it does not appear that the time was come for ceasing from all such visible tokens and marks, in relation to spiritual truth and Christian experience.

14. But here again we see the *real* taking the place of the *formal*; and whatever was left of those visible symbols or tokens for the impressing and emphasizing of spiritual truth, must be so used as to speak truly and powerfully to those on whom they were to be impressed. It is seen in real life, that a slight memorial of one departed—it may be long years ago—a fading miniature or a lock of hair, will call up emotions too deep for tears. It is, we think, upon this peculiarity of our mental constitution that the Christian use of the sacraments mainly depends. The sacraments vividly stir up the faith-faculty, enabling it to realize, as no mere figure of speech, but a most blessed reality, that wherever ‘two or three are met together in Christ’s name, there is He truly in the midst of them,’ to heal and to save<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii. 20. See also Calvin’s *Institutionis Christianæ Religionis*, lib. iv. cap. 14, § 3.

To the mind on which the necessity of holiness has been deeply impressed, the application of pure water, as in the ordinance of Baptism—pure water, the great purifying element in nature, will vividly fix on the mind the necessity for the application of the corresponding cleansing element in grace. The partaking, again, of a common meal, while seated at a common board, to a spirit who has drunk deeply of the truths, facts, and associations brought before it in the New Testament, as to the Last Supper; the upper room, the eleven, with the Master in the midst of them; and all the thrilling sorrows and agitation and sufferings of that eventful night, when the Saviour was preparing Himself and His disciples for the Cross and the shame,—all these, having obtained a form and body in the visible symbols, cannot but arouse deep and powerful emotions, greatly helpful to the future advancement and spiritual growth of the believer.

By calling in the imagination, that potent if lower faculty of the mind, to aid the reason, the symbols enable us to give what is greatly helpful in our present condition, a more distinctive form and body to the thoughts, emotions, and affections of the new nature. Yet we conceive that it was at the same time important that these symbols should be so few and so simple, as not to lead the mind back—or at least to have as little a tendency as possible to lead the mind back—to those superstitious views of symbols to which human nature is so prone.

15. As to the significance and place of these sacred symbols, we conceive this to be brought out with sufficient clearness by Augustine, as approved by Calvin, when he names them *visible words* (*verba*

*visibilia*<sup>1</sup>) by the use of which the truth of God appeals symbolically to the eye instead of rationally to the understanding.

16. Both these, we believe, Word and Sacraments, came more visibly and forcibly before the mind of the Church, as the Apostles of our Lord were summoned from the Church militant to the Church triumphant. So long as the Apostles lived, so great was the plenitude of spiritual power possessed by them, both in the utterance of inspired truth and the exercise of miraculous power, that the eyes of the Churches could not but be fixed upon them as depositaries of the great power of God—the visible organs of the Holy Spirit.

17. But after their departure and the cessation of those mighty works which everywhere accompanied their preaching and their labours, it was only natural for the Churches to turn to the memorials of them left behind—their letters and treatises. These embodied their decisions to the Churches on moot points—their unfolding of certain doctrines, their exhortations to continue in the grace of Christ, as also their accounts of ‘what they had seen with their eyes, looked upon, and their hands had handled of the Word of life<sup>2</sup>.’

18. For the same reason the sacraments would attract greater attention, as enabling believers to realize more vividly the past, and through it to anticipate the future; also let us add, from the superstitions which speedily crept in on every side from the

<sup>1</sup> Vide Calvin’s *Institutionis Christianæ Religionis*, lib. iv. cap. 14, § 6.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John i. 1.

paganized habits of mind of those who made use of the sacraments.

19. The use of the Word and Sacraments indicate, it must not be concealed, a time not yet of perfection. The disciples of Christ are as yet only in process of *becoming* the sons of God<sup>1</sup>. As yet under tuition, they think, speak, and act as children; but when they arrive at the full stature of manhood in Christ Jesus, then that which is imperfect will be done away, ‘they will put away childish things<sup>2</sup>.’ Under the new dispensation which we have reason to expect, as the manifestation of the sons of God, the external Word will give place to the inward, graven not with ink and paper, but on the fleshy tablets of the heart. Then shall be fulfilled the prophecy referring to Israel (but we think not the temporal but the spiritual Israel):— ‘This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest<sup>3</sup>.’

20. But meanwhile the Word is the great visible and outward organ of spiritual influence employed by the blessed everliving Spirit to quicken souls ‘dead in trespasses and sins.’ They hear the word of the Lord, and come forth from their graves preparatory to the final awakening of their bodies from the dust of the earth in which they sleep, on the resurrection morning.

<sup>1</sup> John i. 12. τέκνα Θεοῦ γενέσθαι.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 13; 1 Cor. xiii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. viii. 10, 11.



21. Very much disputation has taken place as to the accuracy of Scripture—the Word written. It has been assumed, on the one hand, that it ought to be characterized by scientific accuracy; on the other, it has been practically regarded as little other than a congeries of unconnected chapters and texts. It may be well to recollect, in opposition to both these views, that as surely as the Redeemer took to Himself a ‘true body,’ and thus became a partaker of ‘flesh and blood,’ and ‘like unto His brethren,’ so the Bible is eminently a *human* book, and has the qualities enabling it to lay hold of the heart of humanity. From this point of view it has in it something of the qualities which rendered the Iliad and the Odyssey so popular in Greece, or the Morte D’Arthur at one time, and the Pilgrim’s Progress now, in England. We certainly do not intend to convey by this the impression that the Scriptures, as compositions, are, like the books referred to, mythological in their character. But we do hold that the Bible has in it those qualities which cast such a charm and interest over these books; and this we hold to be part of its Divine adaptation to the purpose for which it was intended. It is of such a character as to fit it to lay hold of the minds of persons in all stages of human culture. As it behoved the Living Word to be made flesh,—to be made in all things like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in all things pertaining to God<sup>1</sup>,—so it behoved the Word written to be made like unto books which reflect and sympathize with the popular mind; without at the same time containing aught of positive error.

22. The best proof that it contains the words of

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii. 17.

Him who cannot lie, is its *effects*, so unlike those of any other book. What thrilling utterances have come from it to human hearts in all states of mind and feeling, quickening and unveiling the moral consciousness, at a depth of which the man himself was previously unconscious! Few of those who have passed from the death of sin to the life of holiness, but can trace their conversion to the impressions produced by some single verse or passage of this Book of books. 'The entrance of Thy words giveth light<sup>1</sup>,' says the Psalmist; and so, from the Book of God have come those utterances which have first wounded the conscience, and then bound it up by the soothing appliances of a holy and settled peace. And what streams of spiritual life and experience have in all ages flowed from the Book!

It is these things which render it a book altogether *sui generis*; whose claims are not to be set aside by convicting it of an anachronism or verbal inaccuracy. It is the great power of God for the salvation of men; the sword of the Spirit, 'quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and soul and spirit: a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' These functions it will continue to fulfil until shall come the 'second time without sin unto salvation;' until the Bride shall be joined in heavenly union with her Lord; so that no longer the intervention of the Word written is necessary, as the volume left for the comfort of the Church's widowhood.

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxix. 130.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHURCH AS A WORLD-COMMUNITY, SUCH AS SHE EXISTED IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES.

Οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος, οὐδὲ Ἑλλήν· οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος, οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος· οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἓστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἄρα τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, καὶ κατ' ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι.—*Gal.* iii. 28, 29.

1. IT were well, perhaps, to pause at this stage, and note for a little the universal character of the apostolic or New Testament Church. It has already been noticed, that there is reason to believe the Church of the future will be largely a return in manifold wise to the Church of Pentecost. The Church in her bridal attire will be the fairest possible presentment and pattern of the Church when the days of her 'mourning will be ended,' and when she will return to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy will be upon her head<sup>1</sup>.

2. Of this characteristic of universality we believe, moreover, especial note ought to be taken. The lack of it in spirit and in feeling, if not in theory, is one of the grievous defects of our common Protestantism. But if its absence be so marked now, its presence was no less conspicuous during the apostolic

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xxxv. 10.

period of the Church's history. There was a colourless transparency, a freedom from all tinging elements of a national and provincial character, which was truly wonderful, considering the narrow particularism which was the prevailing characteristic of the ancient world. There was neither Jew nor Greek, there was neither bond nor free, there was neither male nor female in the Church that the great Apostle of the Gentiles toiled to set up and extend. And when the Prophet casts his gaze forwards upon the last things, in the book which concludes the Christian revelation, he sees indeed of the twelve tribes sealed in their foreheads; but he sees also a 'great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stand before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,' of those who have come 'out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb<sup>1</sup>.'

3. And this transparent universality of the New Testament Church is the more worthy of notice, because that Church had arisen in the midst of particularisms the most narrow that had ever cramped the human spirit. There was the great feud betwixt Jew and Gentile. A middle wall of partition, of privilege and exclusiveness on the one side, and bitter hatred and contempt on the other, had been built up for ages between the chosen people and the outside nations, and there was 'enmity' alike in the heart of Jew and Gentile, the one to the other. To the Jew, the Gentile was a foul and unclean dog of an unbeliever; to the Gentile, the Jew was hateful as an enemy, or supposed enemy, of the human race<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vii. 9, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Vide Tacitus, Hist. lib. v. cap. 5.

4. Then, in the Gentile world, the same spirit was prevalent. Each nation regarded itself as having sprung from progenitors peculiar to itself, heroes and demi-gods who had but little in common with the progenitors of the neighbouring tribes. To break through the hedge of narrow exclusiveness which enclosed each state or tribe within the narrow boundary of their own manners and customs, national and local prejudices, peculiar laws, and religions, was a work of great difficulty. The feeling of common brotherhood was scarcely ever dreamed of, and doubtless the proclamation of Paul that God had made of one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth<sup>1</sup>, was received as incredulously and contemptuously as Plutarch received the 'phantom of a dream,' which entered the brain of Zeno the Stoic, as to the future brotherhood of the human race. Men were parted from each other in a thousand ways in the heathen world; but chiefly were they held apart by religion. Each nation and tribe had its own tutelary deity or deities, and these were as mutually repellant as the peoples who worshipped them. The notion, therefore, of one Father-God, of one Lord and Saviour of all men, the Elder Brother and Redeemer, one Holy Spirit, and one body, the Church, one faith or type of doctrine, and one Baptism or initiatory act for the whole world, would manifestly be, in this state of things, an abhorrence to the Gentile world. If the Jew were more capable, at least, of receiving such truths intellectually—and doubtless he was so—he was only the more bitterly opposed to it in feeling, as a deprivation, so far as he was concerned, of those transcendent privileges of

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvii. 26.

which, as a child of Abraham, he had been hitherto possessed.

5. True it was there had been antagonistic forces at work. That magnificent system, the Roman Empire, composed originally of a nucleus of predatory fugitives, had spread itself over wellnigh the whole known world. In its progress it had trodden down those 'middle walls of partition' which had separated people from people and tribe from tribe. The national manners and customs, the national religions—though their gods might obtain a niche in the Pantheon at Rome—could not but decay before the Roman policy, the Roman sword, and the Roman law. And thus, in truth, the 'valleys had been exalted, and the hills made low; . . . the crooked had been made straight, and the rough places plain,' before the Saviour of mankind ascended Calvary to consummate the great work by which a world was redeemed<sup>1</sup>.

6. A preparatory work had also been done, to a certain extent, anticipative even of those conquests of Rome. The conquests of Alexander had carried Greek learning and culture over Western Asia. It must be remembered, moreover, that as truly as 'salvation was of the Jews,' so intellectual and æsthetic culture were of the Greeks. Their matchless tongue, and their great master works in science, the fine arts, and philosophy, had become the admiration of the world, concurrently with these Roman conquests, which, if they carried Roman government and law to the ends of the earth, had also carried Greek art, science, and literature in their train. Both Roman law and Greek culture were powerless, it is true, to purify and pre-

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xl. 3, 4.

serve those civilizations which fell into ruins in despite of them. But however, in some of its modern aspects, the Greek culture may seem to militate against the Christian religion, yet the impartial observer must concede, that in many stages of its progress the Greek culture has rendered it the greatest services. The Greek science and philosophy were naturally opposed to Polytheism. The laws of matter and mind naturally converge towards unity. The liberalism of intellectual culture is hostile naturally to the narrowness and particularism of the classical mythological religions. Hence their influence was important as pioneers of Christianity<sup>1</sup>. But when these had done their work, the 'root appeared out of the dry ground,' grew apace, and waxed, until its fruit and its leaves were for the healing of the nations.

7. The Roman conquests must have led in no small degree to the discrediting of the national tutelary deities of the conquered nations. The breaking down of the outer walls and superstitious separations through these conquests must also have contributed to the same result. By this an opportunity was afforded for each nation to pass across the limits of its own state, and inquire into the nature and pretensions of the gods and religious worship of the neighbouring states. Such a scrutiny, which must, more or less, have been undertaken, would be anything but favourable to the permanence of the various systems of idolatry. So slight was the texture of the mythological fables on which these idolatries rested, that critical examination was

<sup>1</sup> The same service was rendered to Protestant Christianity in the great movement of the Renaissance period, which preceded and paved the way for the Reformation.

*certain* to discredit them, and eventually to destroy their authority. Hence the Pantheon at Rome must have been, not so much a collection of the forms in which the divinities of the different ancient nations were embodied, and whose worship was still existent in living forms, as a museum of idols whose pretensions to divinity and worship were rapidly on the decline, if not verging upon extinction.

8. Here, then, we have one reason amongst many for the rapid progress of Christianity. It was a religion in strictest union and harmony with the facts and laws of man's ethical nature, opposed to vile systems of nature-worship, filthy many of them, and degraded and disgusting. In such a state of things, only one possible result could follow, as men grew more enlightened and their moral sense better instructed.

9. Christianity had, however, other than the heathen religions to contend with. Its precursor, Judaism, occupied the same ground, and the conflict with it had much more influence upon Christianity than the classical religions. The first controversy which occupied the infant Church was a controversy having relation to this very question. The Jewish Christians had retained the observance of the Mosaic Law. Their apprehension of Christianity appears to have been as a continuance upon the old ground of the ancient religion, rather than as a supersession of Judaism. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but they failed to perceive the consequences to which this naturally led. They did not understand that the fact that Christ was the Messiah rendered vain and nugatory all the ancient ceremonial, sacrifice and Temple service. For if the Messiah were the antitype or fulfilment



of these, then clearly the coming of the Christ rendered them not only useless, but even pernicious. To offer sacrifices after the one efficient and sufficient sacrifice was offered, only usurped the place and lessened the authority of that all-prevailing Sacrifice. For a human priest to undertake or fulfil the office of mediator between God and man, after that office had finally devolved upon Christ, was manifestly only to trench upon the prerogatives and derogate from the virtue of the One Priest.

10. This, however, appears only to have been apprehended. It was reserved for the great Apostle of the Gentiles, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to perceive fully and clearly develope the truly universal and spiritual character of Christianity. He had had the advantage of a thorough training in the Jewish learning of his age; while, at the same time, his mind had been liberalized by Greek culture. He could thus pass in review the various forms and aspects of the institutes of Jewish religion and theology, and view them from a standpoint which enabled him to measure and discern their true nature and character. The result was, that his eyes were opened to see how completely the religion of Christ fulfilled the Law and the Prophets, and rendered the further observance of them (save in so far as they were regarded as merely innoxious national customs) utterly invalid and unmeritorious. The conflict with his countrymen upon this ground served still further to purify his conceptions, until we read, as in the Epistle to the Galatians, *'In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.'* *'In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.'*

11. The other Apostles whose writings we possess reached the same point, but in a different fashion, and, mayhap, hardly with the same clearness. The preponderance of the dialectical element in Paul enabled him to reach it by a process of discursive and logical reasoning which, embodied in the letters he has left, has wrought powerfully upon the Church, to her gradual purification and reception of the truths he was thus commissioned by the Holy Spirit to teach.

In the mind of John, so far as we can judge, the same conclusion was reached by a process of spiritual intuition springing in part from the fervour of the love he cherished to the risen Redeemer, as also from the peculiarities of his mental constitution. In the burning fervour of that love the *exuvia* of Judaism was burned off from the Apostle, and he came into a position, without perhaps having taken heed to the intellectual process through which he had passed, to apprehend the fact that he 'that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and He in him<sup>1</sup>.' Hence, while a strong light was thrown upon the mountain-peak reached, yet, nevertheless, the upward path was not illuminated, as in the case of Paul, by which the steps of the traveller must ascend. Peter, again, appears to have reached the same goal in a purely practical way. He shrank, in all likelihood, from his brother Paul's open and frank demonstration of the nothingness of Judaism, and conformed to its ritual, without any sense of the incongruity, to the last. But, at the same time, the Lord Jesus Christ so occupied his heart that his conformity to Judaism would be a mere excrescence, although mayhap unperceived by himself.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 16.

12. By the good providence of God, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Paul was honoured first to disengage thoroughly, by a visible intellectual process, Christianity from the decaying elements of the system which preceded it. He first clearly saw and demonstrated that the Law and the Prophets were fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. Under his gaze Christianity appears as the ONE UNIVERSAL world-religion in which the partition between Jew and Gentile is broken down, and Christ appears as the second Adam<sup>1</sup> of a regenerated humanity, fulfilling in His own person the different functions which were typified under the ancient dispensation by the three Divine orders of Prophet, Priest, and King.

13. But here another question emerges in relation to the conception of Christianity as promulgated by the Apostle of the Gentiles, which has not a little occupied the thoughts and consideration of students of primitive Church history. It is this. Seeing how clear and definite the views are which we have, more especially in the Pauline Epistles, of the unity, universality, and spirituality of the Christian religion, how does it come to pass that we find the Christian Church reverting so soon to those 'beggarly elements' which Paul denounced? Various solutions to this have been proposed. Neander looks upon it as a return to the Jewish standpoint, especially as to the identification of the Christian ministry with the priesthood. Others, as Rothe, in his 'Anfänge,' have seen in it the forced reconciliation of the Pauline and Petrine schools in the face of the heretical gnosis which threatened such evil consequences. Thiersch has gone so far as to assume a *fall* from the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.

purity and light of the apostolic period to the corruptions and superstitions of the old Catholic Church<sup>1</sup>.

14. It is not needful to have recourse however to any of these hypotheses—either a full or any special infusion of the Jewish element—in order to account for the great change from the Church of the Apostles to the corrupt and superstitious form of the religious community which we find in the post-apostolic period. To revert only to the admission of Neander, ‘that we see the same in a small scale within the heart and life of the individual believer, as in a large scale in the life of the Church<sup>2</sup>,’ there needs only to be sought in the human heart for those tendencies to *legal worship* which are so powerful there, to be able to account for the speedy depravation of the Church after the apostolic age. There seems to linger in some sort, in the heart of man, a remembrance of, and preference for, the method of the ancient covenant referred to by Paul as having for its terms, ‘the man that doeth them shall live in them<sup>3</sup>.’ The great principle of justification by faith without the works of the Law, which was the distinctive principle of the Pauline theology, has been named the test-principle of a standing or falling Church. This of necessity means, that as the Church declines from her first love, and sinks into a worldly spirit and alienation from her Lord, she falls back from salvation by faith without the works of the Law, upon salvation by good works and self-merit. The living and experimental apprehension of faith working by love to the

<sup>1</sup> Vide Ritschl’s *Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche* Einleitung.

<sup>2</sup> See Neander’s *Planting and Training*, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iii. 12.

reconciliation of the human spirit to God and purification from sin, is indeed the great 'open secret' which every Christian preacher has to reiterate in the ears of men; yea, in the ears of multitudes of nominal Christians, who are none the wiser for it, until the Holy Spirit deal with them to reveal unto them Christ crucified as the only Saviour. It is the surely-emerging dictate of the human heart, that it is by works of righteousness which our own hands have done that we are delivered from the evil, as from the consequences of sin. If the individual Christian falls back as surely as he declines from spiritual life upon the ground of legal righteousness, if this be ineradicably the dictate of the unrenewed mind, and if a declining Church is sure either formally or virtually to eject this article from her creed, then what wonder that the Church, as the 'mixed multitude' entered her camp and cooled her zeal—what wonder that she departed from the doctrines of the true Gospel, and received in their room the inventions of men, falling back upon penances, ablutions, and an earthly priesthood, with all which things her members were but too familiar, as making up the very substance of religion, and all the long train of abuses and perversions which followed them.

15. It must also be remembered that the circumstances of the men who made up the post-apostolic Church were calculated to give them a strong bias in the direction of legalism. They lived under the Roman Empire, the most wonderful specimen of legal craft which the world had ever seen. It has not been traced, so far as we know, how much the Christian Church was wrought upon, and her later constitution modelled, by the legal constitution of the Roman

Empire; but certainly the influence exerted in this direction was very great. Law was the great master-work and special product of the Roman commonwealth. That system of law was permeated, or rather interpenetrated by religion, or rather religiousness; so that, as some one has observed, their politics were religious and their religion political<sup>1</sup>. To persons trained under such a system it could not well be but that it should powerfully influence and colour their whole life, in whatever direction their activity was exerted. Thus may be traced to the influence of the Roman legal spirit, very much of the superstitious veneration for men, offices, and regulations in the Christian Church which was characteristic of the Romish system, and which began to manifest itself so early in the Christian communities.

16. Christianity has, moreover, in every age been deeply coloured by the peculiarities, genius, and characteristic tendencies of the peoples receiving it. It might seem to be desirable that it should be otherwise. It might perhaps have been expected that Christianity would be held aloft free from all human and superstitious intermixture, in the transparent lustre and uncoloured radiance of its universal purity. It must however be remembered that it was the 'leaven *hid* in the three measures of meal until the whole was leavened<sup>2</sup>.' As Christ appeared in the likeness of 'sinful flesh, that for sin He might condemn sin in the flesh<sup>3</sup>;' so the truth of Christ descends into the heart of our common humanity, and is often found in the fermentation which ensues mixed up with super-

<sup>1</sup> Trautmann, Die Apostolische Kirche, neue Ausgabe, S. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xlii. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 3.

stitutions, weaknesses, and even impurities. But it still retains its power to work upwards and cast off the intermixtures with which it comes into contact; and thus we see in Christian societies and communities a power of self-purification by successive sloughs which was wanting in the ancient heathen or classical communities. Thus in process of time came the Reformation, and thus we may hope for continued striving after a still higher and diviner purity as the ages roll on and the days of the Church's widowhood approach their termination. This, moreover, may well encourage us to labour in our Moral Science Association, as a society whose aim is the realization of the Christian Church in her divinest and holiest form.

17. A pattern has been left us in the pure unity, universality, and spirituality of the New Testament Church, combined at the same time with a visible diversity in particular communities, so that we need not despair of reaching the goal. The diversity, though a bar to the uniformity which has been substituted for universality in many minds, may indeed turn out eventually only to be a source of greater elementary richness, and thus add to instead of detracting from the perfection of the Church of the future. The mediæval striving after unity, or rather uniformity, was, in point of fact, only an attempt to reorganize the Roman Empire upon a spiritual field, with a Pope as supreme ruler and pontiff instead of Cæsar.

May we not, however, hope for a higher unity of charity in the future; not, like the Roman and mediæval unity, territorial, but spiritual, when the universal brotherhood of humanity shall have become a practical and recognised truth, and when it shall have

been understood that scholastic speculation is not necessarily the truth of God. The Church must learn to set the facts and experiences of the Christian life and the data of Scripture above the attempts of men to expound them in systems of theology and articles of faith, though these also may stand for what they are worth. Together with this we may look for a fuller realization of the Saviour's presence in the midst of His Church, a warmer affection for His person, and a deeper 'compassion for the ignorant' and 'those that are out of the way.' To restore the Church to the unity, the universality, and the spirituality of New Testament times is, we conceive, an aim well worthy to have a special organization for its promotion. We trust our Moral Science Association will at least contribute something towards this.



## CHAPTER VI.

### PARTICULAR CHURCHES: THEIR RELATION TO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, THEIR DIVERSITY AND YET POSSIBLE UNITY.

‘Had He [the Lord Jesus Christ] publicly presided in bodily person, subsequently to the completion of the redemption by His death, over a Church in Jerusalem or elsewhere, there would have been more plausibility in the claim to *supremacy* which might have been set up and admitted on behalf of that Church and of His own successors in the government of it. His previously withdrawing, made it the more easily to be understood that He was to remain the spiritual Head in heaven of the spiritual Church universal, and consequently of all particular Churches equally in all parts of the world.’—WHATELY’S *Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 142, 143.

‘Uebrigens weil die Tugendpflichten das ganze menschliche Geschlecht angehen, so ist der Begriff eines ethischen gemeinen Wesens immer auf das Ideal eines Ganzen aller Menschen bezogen, und darin unterscheidet es sich von dem eines politischen. Daher kann eine Menge in jener Absicht vereinigter Menschen noch nicht das ethische gemeine Wesen selbst, sondern nur eine besondere Gesellschaft heissen, die zur Einhelligkeit mit allen Menschen (ja aller endlichen vernünftigen Wesen) hinstrebt, um ein absolutes ethisches Ganze zu errichten, wovon jede partiale Gesellschaft nur eine Vorstellung oder ein Schema ist, weil eine jede selbst wiederum in Verhältniss auf andere dieser Art, als in ethischen Naturzustande, sammt allen Unvollkommenheiten desselben, befindlich vorgestellt werden kann (wie es mit verschiedenen politischen Staaten, die in keiner Verbindung durch ein öffentliches Völkerrecht stehen, ebenso bewandt ist).’—KANT’S *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, Werke, 10. Theil, SS. 113, 114.

1. It may be of some value in the present stage of our discussion to inquire what was the relation between that universal Church of which Christians in the apo-

stolic age had the conception—at least so far as we find their opinions represented in the New Testament—and the particular communities which we find rising one after another, as so many successive steps towards the realization of this great ideal.

2. That such an ideal of the universal Church rose before the eyes of the first missionaries of the Cross needs little proof. It is evident to the most casual reader of the New Testament. It was first announced by Jesus Christ Himself, and by those whom He sent out, as ‘being at hand<sup>1</sup>.’ Then, as the Day of Pentecost dawned upon the world, and thousands were joined to the infant Church, the idea unfolded itself with clearness and precision to the minds of the apostolic missionaries. They began to speak of the Church as ‘the pillar and ground of the truth<sup>2</sup>,’ as the body of which Christ is the Head<sup>3</sup>; as the spouse of Christ<sup>4</sup>, as about to be perfected in the future in, through, and for Christ; as the bride<sup>5</sup>, the Lamb’s wife. There was thus clearly before their minds the image of a glorious whole—a world-community to be realized and perfected.

3. Departing, however, from this glorious conception, which fired the minds and rejoiced the hearts of the first missionaries of Christ, and coming to look at the progressive steps taken and the actual advancement toward the realization of this ideal, we perceive much activity and great success. Thousands are added to the Church, as on the Day of Pentecost, to the number of its members<sup>6</sup>. It next extends through Philip

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 9, sqq.; Matt. xvi. 18.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Col. i. 18, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. v. 23, 24, 27; compare i. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Eph. v. 27; Heb. xii. 28; Rev. xxi. and xxii. &c.

<sup>6</sup> Acts. ii. 41; iv. 4, 31.

to the Samaritans, who seem to have been regarded as holding a middle place between the Jews and Gentiles; and finally through Peter to the Gentiles, in the person of Cornelius and his associates. In all these cases the Word, as spoken by the Apostles and Evangelists, is accompanied with power; i. e. by signs and wonders done by the Holy Spirit. At length Saul is introduced into the work; meets at first with some success, then retires for a season, it would appear, into privacy<sup>1</sup>; finally is called out by Barnabas, and specially selected, and sent out in company with Barnabas, by command of the Holy Spirit, to go to the Gentiles. The work then goes on apace in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Thrace, in Greece, and finally in Rome, where that book of the New Testament, whose function it is to give some account of the missionary activity of the apostolic Church, leaves the Apostle a prisoner. In the earliest of the journeys of which we have an account, Barnabas is seen associated with Paul, and even of greater prominence than he; but he afterwards retires more into the background, and the dignity of Paul as the Gentile Apostle clearly appears. He is sent forth specially, like the other Apostles, the fruit of special selection on the part of his Lord. His office 'came neither of men, nor by man; but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead<sup>2</sup>.'

4. Such, in short, is a brief account of the diffusion of the Gospel, in the first stage, through particular communities. There is visible prodigious activity and weighty results, though not without seasons of discouragement and depression, such as link the ex-

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix. 23, 30; Gal. i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 1, 12; 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2; 2 Cor. xi. 5, 6.

perience of the Apostles on to our own<sup>1</sup>. The Word made use of by the Apostles, apart from what they took from the Old Testament Scriptures—and these they knew how to turn to effectual service—was, letting what ‘they had seen and heard, what they had seen with their eyes, and looked upon, and their hands had handled of the Word of life’ appear unto those unto whom they spake. The Word written, so far as the New Testament was concerned, was only in process of formation. But to compensate for this the Apostles are seen to be possessed of great power through the indwelling life and mighty works of the Holy Ghost. The Lord Jesus Christ is risen and ascended to heaven, but He still returns in resurrection form to His servants in the great crises and turning-points of their life-warfare, and thus verifies to them His promise of still being with them, even to the end of the dispensation<sup>2</sup>. In the midst of such circumstances, and with such aids and spiritual powers, the work went on of Christianizing the world.

5. Turning away, however, from the labours of the Apostles and their associates, towards the realization of that glorious ideal which rose before them, and to the realizing of which they felt themselves endowed with

<sup>1</sup> Acts xv. 8. ‘Paul arrived alone in this town (Corinth), and after the letters which he addressed at a later period to the Corinthians, it is seen that he came thither impressed by a solitude and a sadness of a wholly different kind from that which would have resulted from the simple fact of being for a short time alone. He came from Athens, not indeed discouraged, but more penetrated, more terrified up to a certain point, by the greatness and the difficulty of his work.’—Bungener, *Saint Paul, sa Vie, son Œuvre et ses Épîtres*, p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> See Acts vii. 55, 56; ix. 1-22; xxiii. 11,

such wondrous powers, it may be inquired, What were the forms of these early Christian communities? Was there any *one* general *type* or *form* for them all; uniformity of name, ritual, doctrine, and method of procedure?

6. In answer to this question we have to refer to what has been previously pointed out. The New Testament is, strangely as it might appear to some, silent, or all but silent, on the subject. Principles there are indeed, and these recorded, as it were, in 'letters of iron;' but these refer rather to what the New Testament Church ought *not* to be, than to what it ought to be. The relation of the individual Christian to his Saviour and his fellow-disciples is laid down with great fulness and reiteration. One is to be his Master, even Christ, and all other members of the society are to be brethren<sup>1</sup>. The Lord Jesus Christ is to reveal to him the will of God, to be his only Mediator and Priest as between him and God, and to be the Ruler and Supreme Object of his life<sup>2</sup>.

7. But, after conforming to these fundamental principles, a broad margin is left for the calling forth of Christian prudence, wisdom, and common sense in the ordering and government of the community. No single and uniform type of Church-government is laid down. The Synagogue, with whose forms they were familiar, and which had been largely used by both the Lord Jesus and themselves in the publication of the Gospel, would appear to have naturally occurred to them as suitable to their purpose, as furnishing a model from which to copy in the establishment of their communities<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5; John i. 18; Phil. i. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard's *The Synagogue and the Church*; Whately's *King-*

8. Nay, rather, to a certain extent they were shut up to the adoption of the synagogual forms, for the simple reason that any marked deviation would have excited endless prejudice and hostility on the part of the Jews, both in their own country and wherever they were to be found amongst the Gentiles<sup>1</sup>. These, springing from the antecedent spiritual life of the prophetic age, were moreover, in the providence of God, such institutions as were in every way suitable to the purpose intended, and as did not infringe upon the principles which were not to be violated in the formation of the community.

9. Perhaps it will be well to notice that the Church as an institution had of necessity a twofold aim. It sought to embody and join together believers in Christ in a common society for their mutual preservation from the adverse influences by which they were surrounded, their growth in Christian knowledge, and perfection of character. Concomitant with these, and equally important, was the *diffusion* of the Gospel. The Churches were above all to be *aggressive* institutions, directed against the kingdom of darkness and sin<sup>2</sup>. These two conditions, viz. self-preservation and growth, and the diffusion of the Gospel to-wards, was the aim of every Christian society—the *raison d'être* of their existence.

10. We find but little mention in the book which  
dom of Christ, pp. 108, 109, &c.; Neander's Church History, Bohn, vol. i. p. 255; Gieseler's Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. pp. 69, 70; Niedner's Kirchengeschichte, S. 153; Gladstone's Church Principles, pp. 237, 238.

<sup>1</sup> See Gladstone's Church Principles, p. 238, as above; Whately, Kingdom of Christ, pp. 109, 110.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. i. 8.

records the acts of the Apostles, of the election or appointment of the officers in the first Christian societies. The Apostles appeared to have acted on the whole as a body of commissioners, charged by the Saviour with the immediate oversight and the future superintendence and arrangement of the community He was about to call into existence. They were to form a link of communication externally between the Lord Jesus Christ and the Church as a visible institute raised in His name. They were the Divinely selected witnesses and attestors of the facts of the Saviour's life, death, resurrection, and ascension. As such, they had to declare to the world what they 'had seen and heard; seen with their eyes, looked upon, and their hands had handled of the Word of life<sup>1</sup>.' They were to bring men into fellowship with the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit. These being their functions, we find that they selected, with the approval of the community, Matthias to occupy the place of Judas Iscariot, as one of the witnesses for the facts of the Saviour's life, death, and resurrection. Their next recorded step in the ordering of the infant Church, of which we have account, was the request to the community to select certain members of the society as 'servants of tables,' to remove occasion for murmuring on the part of the foreign or Hellenist Jews against those of Jerusalem and Judea, for the neglect of their widows in the daily distribution of alms<sup>2</sup>. It has been inferred, not without great likelihood of its being the fact, that some such servants were already in existence in the Church:

<sup>1</sup> 1 John i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vi. 1 sqq.

The men chosen appear from their names to have been Hellenists by descent<sup>1</sup>.

Such earlier servants or dispensers have been supposed to be indicated by the νεώτεροι, the young men, who carried out Ananias and Sapphira. The premises are however too vague to enable us to come to a determinate conclusion<sup>2</sup>.

11. It has been assumed, however, by a considerable number of writers, that the seven men were the first *deacons* of the apostolic Church in Jerusalem. Others again (such as Ritschl) maintain that their office merged into that of the elder or presbyter. It is clear, however, that they were not deacons, in the later usage of the term, as defined by Paul in the Pastoral Epistles<sup>3</sup>. As little were they to be engaged, immediately at least, in the work of the *elder* or *bishop*, of whom it was demanded, at a later period, that he should be διδακτικός, 'apt to teach.' Others have maintained, as Vitranga, that the office was merely a temporary one, and ceased to exist when the call for the services of these servants of tables came to an end<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Bernard, *The Synagogue and the Church*, Pt. IV. chap. viii.; Whately, *Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 118-119 sqq. Ritschl, however, is of a somewhat different opinion. See *Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche*, S. 355.

<sup>2</sup> Whately's *Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 121, 122; Gieseler's *Ecclesiastical History*, Clark's Translation, vol. i. pp. 69, 70; Niedner's *Kirchengeschichte*, S. 154; Neander's *Planting and Training*, Bohn, pp. 30, 31.

<sup>3</sup> See 1 Tim. iii. 8-13.

<sup>4</sup> It may, however, very well be that the seven men were chosen to be the first presbyters of the Church at Jerusalem, and their office, as servants of tables, to have ceased, or been



12. Concerning the origin of the office of elder or bishop we have no information. We should indeed, in the absence of information, naturally expect that the Apostles adopted those arrangements with which they were familiar. ‘All the circumstances,’ says Dr. Whately, ‘which have been noticed as naturally pertaining to every community are to be found *in that religious community in which the Disciples had been brought up*—the Jewish Church, or (as it is called in the Old Testament) the congregation, or ecclesia, of which each synagogue was a branch. It had regular officers—the elders or presbyters, the rulers of synagogues, ministers or deacons, &c.—it had bye-laws, being not only under the Levitical Law, but also having authority within certain limits of *making* regulations and enforcing them by penalties (among others that which we find alluded to in the New Testament, of excommunication or ‘casting out of the Synagogue’), and it had power to admit proselytes<sup>1</sup>.’

We are the more led to believe that the Apostles adopted the institution with which they were familiar,

transferred to some other. There is not a little in the account given in the sacred text which seems to favour this view. It appears to be nearly the same view that is held by Ritschl. We find certain members of the seven—as Stephen and Philip—presently greatly distinguishing themselves by their zealous preaching and defence of the truth. This, it is true, does not necessarily imply their appointment to the eldership, as the work of preaching was not at that time confined to any official class. But the fact of the contributions sent to Jerusalem by Paul and Barnabas being handed, not to the seven men, but to the elder, seems to imply some such transference to the higher office.

<sup>1</sup> Whately's *Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 93, 94. Italics in original.

because, while we have an account of the appointment of the seven men, and that pretty fully, we have, as already mentioned, no information respecting the origin of the eldership. From the fact that Luke was writing of a subject with which the Jewish Church was familiar, he would naturally leave it out of his history.

We have, however, an account of the election of these officers, the seven men, presumably, as some sects even have supposed, to take charge of the financial arrangements of the Church. We naturally expect, therefore, that when contributions are remitted from abroad for the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem, that these will be handed over to these men so appointed. On turning, however, to Acts xi. 30, where we have an account of such a relief being sent through Barnabas and Saul for the poorer members of the community at Jerusalem, we find that it was not paid to the seven men, but to the elders (*πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους*). Elders as officers had therefore come into existence in the community without any mention being made of their appointment. We naturally conjecture that there must be some reason for this; and if we have reason to believe that the function and office of the eldership was very familiar to the disciples, and if there were no violent break-off or transition from the Jewish Synagogue to the Christian Church, as has been suggested, then the omission would be sufficiently accounted for. The next advance we find in the way of establishing authority and rule in the Christian Church is the position of James 'the Lord's brother.' In the synod at Jerusalem he comes forward as if invested with an authority equal to that of the Apostles, speaking second to Peter; and, as if he were specially

delivering the mind of the community, he suggests the 'decrees' which are adopted. He is reported to have become the president of the community at Jerusalem—a position analogous to a similar office in the Synagogue, and nearly approaching that of a Christian bishop, as the authority of his office was understood at a later period. It is related, moreover, that he was succeeded in this office by Symeon, also a relation of our Lord<sup>1</sup>.

13. The same forms naturally extended themselves to the Gentile Churches. In most cases the first missionaries began their work in the Jewish Synagogue, and amongst the Jews in the Greek or Roman cities they visited; and their first converts were, in consequence, many of them Jews and proselytes. But as the Apostles were wont to install their first converts

<sup>1</sup> Gieseler's Ecclesiastical History, Clark, vol. i. pp. 97, 98, 107. Niedner, in his Kirchengeschichte, thus writes:—'The indications of approaching difference between two degrees of office is found already in apostolic times, not in the diaconal office or that of servant, but in that of the presiding elders or presidents, in the disposition to elevate an episcopate above the simple presbyterate. . . . Thus it was with James the Lord's brother, with Timothy in Ephesus, and Titus in Crete, as also with the seven angels in the beginning of the Apocalypse. The greater distinction, however, of these and certain others, resulted simply from personal influence. It is, nevertheless, not unapparent that the Jewish precedent, in the similar official position of an ἀρχιερεύς (chief ruler of the synagogue), [אֲרִיִּזָּה or אֲרִיִּזָּה], may have here and there contributed; or even the necessity of order in greater communities, where extent of business or the great number of presbyters may have demanded the superiority of one.' Kirchengeschichte, S. 157. See also Neander's Church History, vol. i. pp. 264, 265; Ritschl, Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche, pp. 415-419.

as pastors, elders, and deacons<sup>1</sup>, it was natural, under the circumstances, for these offices to be held, in the first place, by Jews or proselytes. These, again, were likely to fall into and exercise their rule according to the forms to which they had been accustomed, and thus we may regard the Synagogue as the common root from which both Jew and Gentile Churches sprang and were developed. True, the corresponding Greek terms came into use as designations, and thus the Jewish elder (זקן) became a Greek bishop (ἐπίσκοπος).

14. The formation, as the Churches became numerous, throughout the principal cities and districts of the Roman empire, of an external unity to correspond to the ideal unity which was more or less ever present to the minds of the first Christians, appears not only to have been greatly assisted by the legal forms and constitution of the Roman Empire<sup>2</sup>, but also to have derived no small degree of advantage from the successive conflicts against the Gnostic and other heresies of the period. Thus the synod at Jerusalem was convened to decide upon the inquiry propounded by the Church in Antioch, as to the obligation upon the Gentile Christians to conform to the Law of Moses. So in Greece, in like manner, provincial synods appear to have sprung into existence and extended to the other regions of the empire<sup>3</sup>. Thus a variety of circum-

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche*, S. 347; Gieseler's *Ecclesiastical History*, Clark, vol. i. p. 93; Neander's *Church History*, Bohn, vol. i. p. 263; Niedner's *Kirchengeschichte*, S. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Neander's *Church History*, vol. i. p. 281; Niedner's *Kirchengeschichte*, SS. 180, 181.

<sup>3</sup> Neander's *Church History*, Bohn, vol. i. p. 287; Gieseler's *Ecclesiastical History*, Clark, vol. i. pp. 260, 261.

stances served to draw the Churches closer together and swell the power of the clergy.

In opposition to those who contend for a certain original Divine *type* or form of Church government impressed upon the Church, and gradually corrupted by hierarchical and priestly innovations, it must be maintained that it was highly natural, and perhaps inevitable, that there should be a longing in the Church for a grand external unity. Neander has said very well:—‘With the inner fellowship Christianity established also, from the very first, a living outward union among its professors, by which its remotest members were brought near to each other. A determinate form was necessary to realize this union. And this form was naturally enough determined by the forms of social life under which Christianity first unfolded itself in the Roman Empire. But for these existing institutions a system of fraternal equality among the several communities would best have answered to the spirit of Christianity, and most surely have promoted its free uncorrupted manifestation. External circumstances, however, soon gave rise to a system of subordination in the mutual relation of the several Churches. This system, like every other form of society which had grown out of an historical development and contained nothing sinful, Christianity could safely appropriate to itself. Yet, since this relation was not sufficiently imbued with the free and free-making spirit of the Gospel, by being carried out to an undue extent it tended to check and interrupt the development of the Christian doctrine and the life of the Church<sup>1</sup>.’ This craving for outward union, and the recognition of the

<sup>1</sup> Neander’s Church History, Bohn, vol. i. p. 281.

principle of authority in connection with it, is visible in the application from the Church in Antioch, and the decision upon it by the synod at Jerusalem. It has been maintained that there was no recognition of authority on the part of the Church in Antioch; that the question transmitted was simply as to a matter of fact<sup>1</sup>. This, however, cannot be held to be a fair representation of the letter and spirit of the epistle to the Antiochene Church. The latter part of it especially bears the character of a weighty decision: '*It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay nothing more weighty than those necessary things upon you.*' This is surely not the language of those who are simply replying to an inquiry respecting a matter of fact. To 'lay upon' (ἐπιτίθεσθαι) is the language, not of a reply to a question, but the utterance of authority. Then we read, that as Paul journeyed through the cities of Asia Minor, he 'delivered them the decrees for to keep, the things decided upon by the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem<sup>2</sup>.' Nor is the hypothesis better founded which would set aside this exercise of authority by referring it to the Apostles alone, as special and inspired commissioners appointed by the Lord Jesus to arrange the constitution of the Church at the outset. In the letter sent to the Church at Antioch, the elders and brethren are associated with the Apostles<sup>3</sup>, and are regarded as concurring in the decision.

<sup>1</sup> Whately's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 139, 140.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xv.; xvi. 4, φυλάσσειν τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xv. 23. Lachmann omits καὶ οἱ before ἀδελφοί. This reading seems to harmonize with ch. xvi. 4, ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, 'by the apostles and elders.' On the other hand, in ch. xv. 22, we have σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, with the 'whole

15. There can be little doubt, however, that there was in the apostolic Churches a strong tendency to closer external union, in spite of, or rather because of, the many obstacles and opposing tendencies. The Church at Jerusalem was, moreover, looked up to as the mother Church, and regarded as the centre of authority, till the destruction of that Church and the scattering of its members in the days of Hadrian<sup>1</sup>.

The defence of the authority of his apostleship by Paul cannot be held to be hostile to this unity and exercise of authority, seeing that while he contends for his own independent position as a member of the company of the Apostles, he yet, both practically and in theory, concedes, as in the case of the synod at Jerusalem, the fitness of consulting them, both as to ritual and doctrine<sup>2</sup>. There was thus, from the first, a strong recognition of the importance of the unity of the Churches in the Church, or ideal community. However scattered the various communities might be, their relation the one to the other was certainly very different from the accidental association of modern independent congregations. True, there was nothing in it of that *legal* character which subsequently crept in, and is still to be found in all the Churches, but it was, notwithstanding, a most real union.

16. The Gentile communities founded by Paul and Church'—which seems to call for, in verse 23, 'the apostles and the elders and the brethren,' as in the English Version, and not 'the apostles and the elders brethren,' as the proposed emendation makes it. The variation of reading is, however, immaterial to our argument.

<sup>1</sup> See Ritschl, *Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche*, SS. 251–258, 419; Gieseler's *Eccl. History*, Clark, vol. i. pp. 97–99.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xv.; Gal. ii. 2.

others do not appear to have been, by any means, uniform in their ecclesiastical arrangements or the details of their organization with the Jewish Churches or with each other. As already noticed, James first rose in the community in Jerusalem to the dignity and influence almost of a later bishop. The Gentile communities, on the contrary, remained independent of each other, and under the pastoral or episcopal supervision of the Apostles who founded them<sup>1</sup>.

Traces of these differences we find in the Church in Palestine retaining the forms of the Synagogue more tenaciously than the Gentile Churches. In Alexandria, where the Church had been more directly connected with Jerusalem through the Evangelist Mark<sup>2</sup>, the presbyters retained longer (up to A.D. 240) the right of nominating and ordaining one of their own number as bishop. One of the earliest controversies between the bishops of Rome and the provincial Churches was on this very point, whether the local customs of the Roman Church should not override those obtaining in the provincial Churches. But they were, on this occasion, opposed by such zealous advocates of episcopacy as Irenæus and Cyprian<sup>3</sup>. Such variations of service and liturgy indeed never ceased, notwithstanding the passion for uniformity which prevailed in the mediæval Church, and when the Papal power was greatest, as we may learn when mention is made of the Use of Sarum within the Church of England. So we learn

<sup>1</sup> Gieseler's *Eccl. History*, Clark, vol. i. pp. 106, 107; compare p. 93; Niedner's *Kirchengeschichte*, S. 157; Ritschl, *Die Entstehung*, pp. 415-419.

<sup>2</sup> See Gieseler, *Eccl. History*, vol. i. p. 106, note.

<sup>3</sup> Neander's *Church History*, vol. i. pp. 299, 300.



also that while triple immersion was generally practised in baptism, it was not fully received in Spain, on the ground of the evil use made of it by the Arian heresy<sup>1</sup>.

So far from there being the same striving after uniformity that we find in modern denominations, we read, as the view of Gieseler<sup>2</sup>, that 'the other regulations of the Church were left free to each society; innocent national customs were observed (1 Cor. xi. 4), and therefore they differed in separate communities.' As the desire for closer external unity grew among the Churches, we find some with a bishop placed over the college of presbyters, while others still retained their ancient purely presbyterial form<sup>3</sup>. So much, then, for traces of varied and independent development in the various communities constituting the apostolic Church.

17. The institution of provincial assemblies, to which reference has already been made, was a natural outcome of the circumstances in which the early Christians found themselves placed. They are said to have originated in Greece upon the ground of the old Amphictyonic League, and thus may have owed their origin to the old Greek feeling in favour of such conventions. They could not, however, fail to nourish powerfully the tendency to greater unity and uniformity of internal and external arrangement.

It must also be remembered that the powerful pressure upon the Christians from without must have wrought greatly in the same direction. The opposition of the heathen persecution by the magistrates or the populace drove the Christians together, and consolidated the

<sup>1</sup> Höfling, *Das Sacrament der Taufe*, vol. i. pp. 56, 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Ecclesiastical History*, Clark, vol. i. p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> See Ritschl, *Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche*, pp. 402, 403.

bonds of union already formed. The same tendency was at work at the time of the Reformation, in the union of Protestants against Romanism.

18. We are thus brought into a position to construe to ourselves the views and aims of the apostolic missionaries. They had the great ideal, as the object towards which they worked, of that great world-community of the Church of Christ, which was to be 'without spot or blemish, or any such thing<sup>1</sup>.' The various local and provincial associations were organized by them as means to this end, and provided this end were kept in view, with 'love out of a pure heart, and out of a good conscience, and of unfeigned faith<sup>2</sup>,' they were as indifferent to the minutiae of ritual and the 'mint and cumin' of doctrinal controversy, as the various associations throughout the country for the suppression of intemperance are indifferent as to whether one local society has a president, or only a secretary, while others have committee men, of which a third society is destitute. Not, indeed, but that attention was given to these things, as became those who were legislators for such a great institution as the Christian Church, but they were regarded as *means* to an *end*, which end was above all things supreme<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 27.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. i. 5.

<sup>3</sup> The above is not to be understood as agreeing with the view of the Church so popular with a certain class of Dissenters in this country, and which may be named the 'voluntary club' theory. The fact whether there was to be a visible embodiment of the ideal of the Church or not, was certainly not left to the 'will of the flesh,' or the 'will of man,' but was of God. Men are called out of the world and are joined to this holy community, the Communion of Saints. Comparatively, however, the contemplation of the *end* was so intense with the Apostles, as to divert all undue attention from the *means*.

The means, moreover, in the various forms, rites, and methods of organization, were as yet *unfossilized*; they were not become objects of veneration in themselves. Hence there may have been, as Rothe has maintained, superintendent presbyters in some of the Churches, even before the death of the Apostles<sup>1</sup>.

The corruptions of the Church did not spring primarily from modes of Church government. They originated in those superstitious legal and religious usages which poured into the Church when it became in the Roman Empire the fashion to leave Paganism for Christianity. The multitudes which then entered of ignorant and worldly minds sought to realize the organization of the Roman Empire in the constitutional forms of the Church; to restore the religion of spectacle to which they had been accustomed—the altars and gods they had professed to forsake—in the simple ritual of Christianity. Presbyterianism, Episcopacy, or Congregationalism, may each, it appears to us, be employed profitably in certain circumstances, and in relation to certain peculiarities of national character, in upholding and disseminating the Truth. It is quite natural, in view of the various grades of society or industrial organizations, that there should be foremen, inspectors, and superintendents, as well as general workmen. We cannot construct a railway or canal without such a natural organization of the workers. But why are we not to employ such natural modes of organization in the Christian Church?

The Apostles superintended the Churches they had

<sup>1</sup> See Rothe, *Anfänge*, S. 354-392; Ritschl, *Die Entstehung*, S. 410.

erected. It was only common sense that they should<sup>1</sup>. Where is this natural and common-sense method of organization prohibited? No doubt, after the death of the Apostles, the various Churches were, so far as legal constraint was concerned, or aught but fraternal intercourse, independent of each other<sup>2</sup>; but the fact is, from this point of view, they were independent during the life-time of the Apostles. The Apostles exercised over them a moral and spiritual—legal control they had none.

19. Again, if it seemed good to the Church of a country to put the office of bishop, so to speak, into commission, and vest its powers in a plurality of men (presbyters), as the Free Church of Scotland is doing at present, why should it not be done? What is there against it in the Word of God?

Others, again, as the Congregationalist and Baptist communities in this country, may adopt a monarchical constitution, and govern by one man raised to the pastorate. Why not? The one great test is, as it seems to us, success in bringing souls to the Redeemer. 'By their fruits ye shall know them<sup>3</sup>.'

20. The truth is, the accusations of 'tyranny,' 'licence,' 'anarchy,' 'lording it over God's heritage,' which are bandied about so freely in the religious world, arise from the intermixture of legal constraint, superstition, bigotry, and party-spirit, by which all the denominations are more or less tainted. The quint-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Niedner's Kirchengeschichte, S. 160; Ritschl, Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche, SS. 436 sqq.; Neander's Church History, vol. i. p. 300; Gieseler's Eccl. Hist., Clark, vol. i. p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. vii. 16.

essence of Popery is to substitute superstitious fear and legal constraint for the love of Christ. This is what all parties are protesting against. Why may not a venerable good man superintend the Churches of a district, if the episcopal crook he uses be of a spiritual and not of a carnal sort; if his rule be, not of constraint but of a 'ready mind' ?<sup>1</sup> The reformers, such as Calvin and Knox, saw no reason why it should not be so<sup>2</sup>.

Or if, as some think, the office may be more efficiently discharged by a number of presbyters assembled in a presbytery, let them fulfil it, but by spiritual and not fleshly constraint. The Christian Churches are still oppressed by the spectres of mediæval Popery, which haunt even the most pretendedly enlightened and free of them. If the Christian Churches would open their eyes to the light of the dawning day, clear their minds of the empty simulacra by which they are oppressed, get rid of the circumcisions and uncircumcisions which they are substituting for the 'new creature' and 'the faith which worketh by love,' then we should no more hear them quarrelling about rites, the 'mint and cumin' of doctrine, and forms of Church polity, than we hear men who are about to tunnel through a mountain quarrel about the way in which their workmen are to be arranged. We believe, that within certain principles, Church-government is a matter of Christian expediency; and the best form is, that which is most efficient in the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and the bringing in of the kingdom of God<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter v. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Bungener's Calvin, pp. 462, 463; Cunningham's Hist. of the Church of Scotland, vol. i. p. 439.

<sup>3</sup> Whately's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 144, 145.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE OFFICERS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

Καὶ οὗς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δεύτερον προφήτας, τρίτον διδασκάλους, ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, εἶτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων, ἀντιλήψεις, κυβερνήσεις, γένη γλωσσῶν.—1 Cor. xii. 28.

Καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκε τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους.—Eph. iv. 11.

I. IT is now fitting that we should say something as to the officers of the apostolic Church. Something has already been said, but in such a general and cursory fashion as to render a more extended and particular treatment of the subject needful. Whence then did the officers of the Church spring; and the polity wherewith they were connected, spring? Did the Apostles simply take up and adopt in the Christian Church the forms already existing in the Jewish Synagogue, only giving them such a degree of development as the circumstances required? Or did they legislate for the infant community altogether *de novo*, as Lycurgus did for the Spartans? Or, again, were both methods combined; not simply taking up as a whole the forms of the Synagogue, and expanding them as circumstances required, nor originating a wholly new scheme of polity, but while retaining very much of the forms of the Synagogue, adopting under the guidance of the Holy

Spirit at the same time such new forms as were necessary for the full expression of the new life?

2. The last of these we conceive to be the method followed by the Apostles. They conformed generally to the institute of the Synagogue. They installed a body of presbyters, represented at first it would appear by themselves, as the head of the first Christian Synagogue or Church. To these, junior assistants or chazan were added. Of these last, probably, were the *neōteroi* and *neaniskoi* mentioned in the Acts, to which reference has already been made. These were not perhaps ordained, or formally set apart in the as yet unformed state of the Church. The murmuring of the Grecian or Hellenist Jews against their Palestinian brethren, led to a more formal selection and installation of men, either additionally to the *neōteroi*, or with the view of performing a part of their duties. But the charismata, the gifts of the Spirit, came in to impinge upon this merely natural way of development. Individuals thus endowed were clearly designated for the office they were destined to fill; and to this, subsequently, they appear to have been formally ordained or set apart by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, and with the approval of the community in which they were to exercise their gifts. The spiritual gifts thus bestowed upon the Church were however, we find, liable to be abused or misused; and so we find a certain power of control vested in the Apostles and in the community. We have an example of this in the Corinthian Church, in reference to the charismata of speaking with tongues and prophecy, in both which they were desirous to excel.

3. Hence, it would appear, the view of the apostolic

Church was diametrically opposed to that of the Romish Church, and some other communions of our own day. These last hold that a certain stream of indefinable, mystical, and mysterious power flows through the hands of the episcopate, in virtue of which the recipient is endowed with unknown yet awful powers, without which his functions performed as a priest would be null and void. In the apostolic Church, at least in its earlier stage, we have no evidence of this. The charisma bestowed by the Holy Spirit indicated the individual fitted to rule and teach, and it was the business of the presbytery simply to recognise this and render it a formal office by the laying on of hands. Paul writes to Timothy:—‘Neglect not the gift (*χαρίσματος*) that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.’ We learn that Timothy had been designated by some one of the prophets as a fitting person for the office he exercised as assistant and deputy of the Apostle, and that the laying on of the hands of the presbytery was a *recognition* and not a *conferring* of the charisma<sup>1</sup>. Ritschl informs us:—‘If now the Apostles ordained their first converts as leaders in the community, after they had, as Clement says, proved them through the Spirit, it is clear that through the ordination the charisma becomes a formal office; but it is equally clear that it was not the calling through the Apostles which constituted the Divine origin of the office. This lay in the personal charisma, and not in any form by which the recognition of this was mediated<sup>2</sup>.’

There were thus, in those manifestations of the Holy

<sup>1</sup> See Ritschl, *Die Entstehung*, SS. 362-364.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* SS. 348, 349; Gieseler, *Eccl. History*, vol. i. p. 90.



Spirit, principles at work distinctively Christian, in contrast to the merely natural development from the Jewish Synagogue. Had the Apostles been minded to develop the Church purely upon the ground of experience and precedent (and there seems to have been some tendency in their minds in this direction—witness their slowness in communicating the Gospel to the Gentiles), this tendency was counteracted by the powerful working of the Holy Spirit. Thus new offices were raised up in the Church as well as forms taken up which, perhaps, would not have otherwise suggested themselves to the minds of the Apostles<sup>1</sup>.

4. The fact is thus presented to us that in the early Church, while the universal distinction between the *real* and the *formal* is recognised, yet the greatest pains are taken to secure the real as the basis of the formal. It is only in later times, when the influences of the Holy Spirit become less visibly manifest in the Church, that *formal* office, without the *reality* which ought to have been present beneath it, could come into being.

5. There was, moreover, the recognition of the *trying* power in the Church, and a formal designation by the triers, of the persons tried to the offices for which they were designated<sup>2</sup>. It is needful to remember this in view of the vagaries of brethrenism in our own day. The Christians were to 'try the spirits,' whether they were of God<sup>3</sup>. Paul writes to Timothy admonishing him to use caution in the exercise of this trying power committed to him in common with the other evangelists. He instructs him 'to lay hands suddenly

<sup>1</sup> Niedner's Kirchengeschichte, S. 153.

<sup>2</sup> See the passage from Ritschl quoted on the previous page.

<sup>3</sup> 1. John iv. 1.

on no man<sup>1</sup>;' as also, what things he heard of the Apostle 'among many witnesses,' 'to commit the same to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.' There was also, as we learn, a trying power vested in the prophets to judge of each other's deliverances<sup>2</sup>.

6. We are thus led to the truth concealed beneath the apostolic succession, concerning whose mystic virtues so much has been said. There was always a recognised body of rulers and teachers in the Christian Church apart from the general exercise of their gifts by the whole community which was permitted<sup>3</sup>. The Apostles in the first instance, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, subsequently the evangelists, their deputies, under the same guidance, were to select and try men for the perpetuation of the offices<sup>4</sup>. When they had exercised their trying power, with the approval of the people, they were solemnly to ordain the 'faithful men' who had been marked out by the Holy Spirit as possessing the requisite gift, by the Jewish rite of the laying on of hands, still retained in the Christian Church as an emblem of the communication of authority.

7. Hence the origin of the ecclesiastical phrase, that the appointment of presbyters or bishops belonged *de clericorum testimonio, de plebis suffragio*, 'by nomination or testimony to the clergy, by suffrage to the people<sup>5</sup>.' Subsequently, when the Apostles and their deputies were called away from the Church by death, this function of nomination to the offices of the Church was

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. v. 22; 2 Tim. ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Neander's Church History, vol. i. pp. 258-260; Ritschl, *Die Entstehung*, SS. 350-352.

<sup>4</sup> Titus i. 5.

<sup>5</sup> See Gieseler's Eccl. History, Clark, vol. i. p. 93 note.

vested in a body of curators, or approved men of the clerical order, with the right, on the part of the people, to veto the appointment if displeasing or unsatisfactory<sup>1</sup>.

8. The method by which the offices in the apostolic and post-apostolic Churches were filled up was thus substantially *curatorial*, a fact worthy of all consideration. The approved men (ἐλλόγιμοι ἄνδρες), as described by Clement of Rome, were doubtless approved by the whole body of the community, or otherwise elected, and then proceeded to perform the duty for which they were appointed<sup>2</sup>.

This was then the method which was found most suitable by the apostolic Church for the selection of men who should carry forward the sacred lamp of Gospel truth to succeeding generations. Hence, as already noticed, the true apostolical succession:—each generation of office-bearers, in concurrence with the people, selecting solemnly those whom they believed ‘were able to teach others also,’ and ordaining them to office, likewise with the approval of the community.

9. Coming now to the offices of the Church, it will be well to note cursorily their distinctive characteristics. We have more than one passage of Scripture in which they are enumerated in order. In 1 Corin-

<sup>1</sup> Neander's Church Hist., Bohn, vol. i. pp. 262, 263; Gieseler's Eccl. History, Clark, vol. i. p. 93 and note; Niedner's Kirchengeschichte, S. 167; Ritschl, Die Entstehung, SS. 364, 365.

<sup>2</sup> The curatorial mode of filling office has been found, it is worthy to observe, by far the most efficient in all public institutions. It is through this method of appointing officers that many of the German and Dutch Universities have achieved the fame and position accorded them. For a history of curatorial patronage as applied to universities, see Sir W. Hamilton's Discussions, Second Edition, pp. 371-385.

thians xii. 28, and Ephesians iv. 11, we have such an enumeration of the offices in the apostolic Church, given as *charismata*—gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the first of these passages we read, ‘first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers,’ then a number of inferior or subordinate gifts. In the second of the passages we have substantially the same enumeration in the same order, but that *evangelists* are intercalated between prophets and ‘pastors’ or ‘teachers.’ The pastors and teachers became eventually, if they were not originally, identical. As, according to the received chronology, the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written in A.D. 56 at Ephesus, while that to the Ephesians was written in A.D. 61 at Rome, where the Apostle was a prisoner, the necessity of recognising these deputies as the holders of a special office, may have commended itself in the meantime to the mind of the Apostle.

10. As to the special functions of the apostolic office, and its permanence in the Church, this we cannot but regard as fairly settled. The Apostles were the Divinely called witnesses for the facts of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. They were the first rulers of the Church, in the sense of being its first actual rulers, and at the same time a body of commissioners specially charged with the details of its organization and working. They were however, above all, servants of the Word (*διάκονοι τοῦ λόγου*), as inspired to declare to the Church and the world ‘the things they had seen and heard, had seen with their eyes, looked upon, and their hands had handled of the Word of life.’ As we have already noticed, the Word written appears only to have come into pro-

minence after their decease; for they were the media by which the Word was largely, if not exclusively, spoken.

That their office could not, however, in its essentials be permanent, is evident from the facts themselves. None could be 'eye-witnesses and depositaries of the facts and doctrines of the Gospel,' when Christ was no more visible to the bodily eye, and when the facts and doctrines were recorded in the written Word. There was no need, moreover, for a body of commissioners charged with the organization of the Church after the work was complete. That their office of superintendents was transferred to the diocesan episcopate has often been maintained, but still remains to be proved. It is indeed denied that they were, properly speaking, the selectors of the elders or bishops, terms in their day admitted to be synonymous, because this was done directly by the Holy Spirit by the bestowal of the charisma, which was the *real* qualification for their office<sup>1</sup>. No doubt the recognition of the charisma and its formal conversion into office was entrusted to them. What is indeed inconsistent with this claim of successorship on the part of the episcopate, is the fact that the ἐλλόγιμοι ἄνδρες, the select men, who nominated the bishops, do not appear to have been always clerics, although we admit that generally they were so<sup>2</sup>. It is noticeable, moreover, that while the Apostles were preeminently 'servants of the Word,' giving themselves 'continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word<sup>3</sup>,' their so-called successors were

<sup>1</sup> See Ritschl, *Die Entstehung*, SS. 362-364.

<sup>2</sup> Niedner's *Kirchengeschichte*, S. 167; Neander's *Church History*, vol. i. pp. 262, 263.

<sup>3</sup> Acts vi. 4.

not, in the first instance, necessarily teachers at all<sup>1</sup>.

II. The office or offices of teaching and preaching—the last notably so—were vested rather in the whole community<sup>2</sup>, and only at a later period did it become closely associated with the office of elder or bishop. It may indeed be proved that in process of time *bishops arose who claimed to be successors of the Apostles*, as indeed this was claimed for the presbyters as well<sup>3</sup>. But these moderators of the presbyteries, raised to the special designation of bishops, claimed also to be priests, after the order of Aaron. For the one claim or the other, so far as we can see, Scripture is silent. Presumably, were such an important office as the apostolate to be perpetuated in the Church, we should have expected some directions as to its perpetuation. We have, however, none such; the office ceased to be, and the *onus* of proving the fact of its continuance in the Church lies upon the shoulders of those who maintain that the Apostles were to have successors<sup>4</sup>. Doubtless there is a succession in the sense of provision being made for the successive selection of a body of rulers and teachers in the Church, under the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit, by whatever title these teachers and rulers may be designated, whether pastor, presbyter, bishop, superintendent, &c.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Die Entstehung*, SS. 350, 351; Gieseler, *Eccl. History*, Clark, vol. i. p. 90; Niedner's *Kirchengeschichte*, SS. 155, 156.

<sup>2</sup> See Ritschl, Gieseler, Niedner, as above; and Neander's *Church History*, Bohn, vol. i. pp. 258, 259.

<sup>3</sup> Clemens Romanus, *Ad Corinth.* cap. 42-44.

<sup>4</sup> See Albert Barnes on *Apostolic Church*, pp. 47, 48, sqq.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 2; Titus i. 5; Acts xiv. 23.

But that these officers of the Church received mystic virtues from the Apostles, which they in an equally mysterious fashion communicated to their successors, may be left to be dealt with by those who believe and are interested in it.

12. The office of evangelist may next be considered, from its close relation to the apostleship. It is observable that the Apostle, in the passage already referred to, places the office as subordinate to that of the prophet. This arose in all likelihood from the peculiarly supernatural character of the office as a charisma of the Holy Ghost. At the same time the office of prophet does not appear to have been so *practically* useful in the Church as that of the evangelist. The functions of the evangelist, apart from his work as a travelling preacher, appears to have been to act as deputy or legate to the apostle. As such, it does not appear to be susceptible of transmission any more than the apostolate itself. The powers of such men as Timothy and Titus were communicated to them by the Apostles, and could not be derived from any lower source. As travelling preachers and travelling superintendents of districts or circuits (for the evidence as to their final location is far from sufficient), successors they may have had, and the Church, in most of the sections of which she is made up, is exercising her right to call out such men to the present day; but as deputies of the Apostles, and charged with their extraordinary powers, they have necessarily ceased to be<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Whately's Kingdom of Christ, pp. 276, 277; Albert Barnes on Apostolic Church, pp. 77-144. On the contrary, see Gladstone's Church Principles, pp. 189-281; Boyd's Episcopacy and Presbytery, pp. 223-237.

13. The prophetic office is put immediately after that of the Apostles. This no doubt arises from the mysterious nature of the gift, as bringing the possessor into closer relation to the Holy Spirit. This office is associated with the gift of speaking with tongues, as a kind of ecstâtic possession in which the possessor, like the Old Testament prophets, gave forth utterances under the immediate dictation of the Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>.

It would appear, that before the gift of teaching came into prominence and received the sanction of official recognition—of course leaving out of account the instructory character of the Apostles' ministry—the work of teaching was performed by the prophets<sup>2</sup>. This was, however, not foreign to the character of their charisma, if we remember the function of the Israelitish prophet with whom the New Testament prophet must have been closely connected. The office was, however, so closely dependent upon supernatural communications, that it could not, like the pastoral office, assume a regular and stated character; and thus could not be formally designated as a permanent office in the Church.

14. The office of elder or pastor (*πρεσβύτερος, ποιμήν*) was not, as already noticed, originally associated with that of teacher (*διδάσκαλος*). It might be, and even eventually became so associated, as we learn from the Pastoral Epistles. A bishop who at once *taught* and *ruled* was to be esteemed worthy of 'double honour'—*payment*, as interpreters explain the phrase. In the Second Epistle to Timothy, Paul recognised 'aptness to teach'

<sup>1</sup> See Neander's Church History, vol. i. p. 258; Niedner, Kirchengeschichte, S. 231; Ritschl, Die Entstehung, SS. 471-473.

<sup>2</sup> Trautmann, Die Apostolische Kirche, SS. 322 sqq.



as one amongst the bishop's qualifications<sup>1</sup>. There was, moreover, a college of such men in every Church or Christian community, after the same manner as in the Synagogue of the Jews.

15. That the proclamation of the Gospel preaching, or even teaching, was not confined in the apostolic Church to any class of officials, is highly significant<sup>2</sup>. It accounts in part, there can be little doubt, for the wonderful expansion and rapid success of the apostolic Church. The privilege, however, might be abused, and hence cautions and warnings as to its exercise in the writings of the Apostles<sup>3</sup>. It is worthy of notice, moreover, that there is a distinction recognised in the New Testament as to the mode of communicating truth. In the Gospels we read of *preaching* (κηρύσσω) and *teaching* (διδάσκω). It is also observable that the cautions refer to the *teaching* and not to the *preaching*. This suggests a difference between them. And in point of fact such a difference did exist. The preaching was simply *proclaiming*, by conversation or in any mode of free speech, the Gospel as experienced by him who proclaimed it; the teaching was the more elaborate process of instruction by those that were competent in the deeper parts of the Christian system<sup>4</sup>. The first of these, so far as we can judge, remained with the people, as not exposed to much danger of abuse; but the second, i. e. the power of teaching, seems gradually to have been confined to those evidently possessing the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. ii. Ritschl, Die Entstehung, SS. 350-353.

<sup>2</sup> See Acts viii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John iv. 1; James iii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. ix. 35. See also Dr. Campbell's Translation in loco, Works, vol. iii.; Whately's Logic, Appendix i. 21, and Kingdom of Christ, Part II. § 1.

charisma, or those who were designated for it by office. If we bear this distinction in mind, it may prove useful in reconciling the differences which sometimes arise betwixt clergy and laity as to this point in our own day. Preaching, that is *proclaiming* the Gospel of the kingdom, may well belong to all who have received the grace of God. They may and ought to go and tell the world 'what great things the Lord has done for them'<sup>1</sup> in bringing them out of the kingdom of darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the children of God. At the same time the power of teaching ought to be confined to those who are clearly possessed of the charisma and are properly qualified. This appears to have been recognised even in the post-apostolic age. Origen was permitted in the middle of the third century to expound the Scriptures, while as yet without ordination, by two Palestinian bishops. These, when reprov'd for granting the permission, defended themselves on the ground that the thing was generally in practice<sup>2</sup>.

16. That the presbyter and bishop, the pastor and those having the rule (*ἡγούμενοι*), were offices originally identical, is almost universally admitted<sup>3</sup>. The steps which led to diocesan episcopacy have already been referred to. The presiding presbyter in the college of elders, which was to be found in almost every Church,

<sup>1</sup> Mark v. 19; Luke viii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Neander's Church History, Bohn, vol. i. p. 274; Ritschl, Die Entstehung der Alt Katholischen Kirche, pp. 351, 352.

<sup>3</sup> Ritschl, Die Entstehung, S. 350; Neander's Church History, Bohn, vol. i. p. 256 sqq.; Gieseler's Eccl. History, Clark, vol. i. p. 88, note; Trautmann's Die Apostolische Kirche, neue Ausgabe, SS. 344, 345; Niedner's Kirchengeschichte, SS. 167, 168.

became a perpetual *moderator*. The term *bishop* (ἐπίσκοπος), originally a Greek designation of the presbyter, derived from the Jewish *zakēn* of the Synagogue, was wrested from its signification as a synonyme for presbyter and applied to the new office. The first bishops were thus officers presiding over *single* communities, and not diocesan bishops<sup>1</sup>. But since the churches in large towns had usually a number of dependent village and suburban congregations over which the bishop of the central community exercised the same authority as over the central community, the original moderator of the college of presbyters easily passed into the diocesan bishop, or bishop of bishops. There were struggles, however, at every step which enable us, even in the paucity of records, to catch some glimpses of the process. The presbyters resisted the usurpations of their moderators, who appear first to have been elected in rotation; and the *chorepiscopus* or country bishop was unwilling to yield up his independence and submit to the authority of his urban brother. The times were however favourable; the spirit embodied in framing the lay offices of the empire prevailed; the constant squabbling of the presbyters with each other disgusted the Christian people; and the change therefore took place in spite of all opposition<sup>2</sup>.

17. The *diaconate* of the later apostolic Church was, it appears, a preliminary office to that of the presbyter or bishop. He acted as the servant of the presbyter, or subsequently of the bishop, when the latter office acquired

<sup>1</sup> See preceding note.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Die Entstehung*, SS. 400 sqq.; Neander's *Church History*, Bohn, vol. i. p. 264 sqq.; Gieseler's *Eccl. Hist.*, Clark, vol. i. p. 260 sqq.; Niedner's *Kirchengeschichte*, SS. 198 sqq.

a préponderance, as the distributor of alms, the bearer of the sacramental elements to the houses of those who were sick, &c. His diligence in this office, and in his duties generally, were to purchase for him a 'good degree<sup>1</sup>,' which is interpreted to mean promotion to the presbyterate<sup>2</sup>. The seven men have been generally assumed to be deacons, but upon very slender grounds. There is more reason to believe that the office was a temporary one, as maintained by Vitringa, or that the office passed into the higher office of presbyter<sup>3</sup>. The seven men were 'servants of tables' (διάκονοι τῶν τραπεζῶν), the later deacons were, like the Apostles, servants of the Word (διάκονοι τοῦ λόγου)<sup>4</sup>.

18. We come, in the last place, to the office of *angel*, mentioned in the seven Epistles, and at the beginning of the Book of Revelation. There has been much controversy as to the meaning of the term. This has been, as usual, proportionally great to the weakness of the historical evidence. The term is used, be it noticed, in a prophetic work, whose contents are highly figurative. The simplest conclusion seems to be that he was, after the analogy of the Synagogue, the president or moderator of the college of presbyters. In the Synagogue, however, while the president was *ex officio legatus*, or messenger, any other presbyter might exercise its powers. Others, as Ritschl, suppose him simply to be a personification of the Church itself or its college of presbyters<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 13. καλὸς βαθμὸς.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, Die Entstehung, &c., SS. 353-355.

<sup>3</sup> See preceding note.

<sup>4</sup> See Ritschl, Die Entstehung, &c., S. 355.

<sup>5</sup> Ritschl, Die Entstehung, &c., SS. 408, 409; Whately's Kingdom of Christ, Part II. § 20; Bernard's The Synagogue and the Church, pp. 193, 194.

The conclusions respecting the office of angel have little force above mere conjecture, and but for the *penchant* of critics to be quite certain of a matter when certainty is out of the question, we should have had less controversy on the subject in treating of Church polity.

19. The question may be put, in conclusion:—Granted that a margin was left in the Church for developments of a natural kind, how far may this be safely carried out? The answer is somewhat difficult, but we shall assay an answer in the sequel, whether it prove satisfactory or not. All agree as to certain *principles* of Church order which were laid down by the Lord Jesus. Dr. Whately, who has dealt ably with the subject in his ‘Essays on the Kingdom of Christ,’ says: ‘The inference seems to be inevitable that they purposely left these points to be decided in each age and country, according to the discretion of the several Churches, by a careful *application* of the *principles* laid down by Christ and His Apostles<sup>1</sup>.’ This seems to us to be the exact state of the case; but the question again recurs—what are these *principles*? We shall endeavour to deal with this question in the next chapter.

20. Meantime, we would draw attention to the fact that we behold the same problem substantially before us being wrought out by the great Missionary Societies, although on different fields and in very different circumstances. The London Missionary Society is just as freely appointing superintendents, with episcopal—yea, *true* episcopal—powers over many missionary stations in India and elsewhere, as if it were *not* supported chiefly by Congregationalists, and most of its

<sup>1</sup> Kingdom of Christ, pp. 144, 145. Italics in original.

missionaries trained in the ranks of Congregationalism<sup>1</sup>. Verily nature is more powerful than our theories.

21. Discount the superstitious veneration which clusters around the respective systems of Church polity in the minds of their votaries, let a Christian common sense decide, and we shall have but little difficulty in the matter. But so long as the Episcopalian venerates the apostolical succession, the Presbyterian waxes fanatical upon 'primitive purity,' and the Independent boasts of his isolation as 'freedom,' so long will the religious world be rent into so many warring camps, filled with jealousy, ill-feeling, and misrepresentation of each other's characters and motives; the end whereof is that the world laughs, infidels scoff, and the Saviour is wounded in the house of His friends. There is not a locality in Great Britain where men will not separate themselves from an existing Church, however earnest and active, in order to found a new community, if the opportunity present itself, in obedience to their own preconceived theories and notions of Church polity, and their personal preference for the favoured system. If the Congregationalist join for a time a Presbyterian community, it is because he cannot help himself. The Presbyterian is in the same state of mind, and the Episcopalian more so. But surely if these things belong to the 'circumcisions' and the 'uncircumcisions,'—and there are few Evangelicals that will venture to deny it,—then surely they are not guiltless who thus, thoughtlessly and capriciously, are ready to rend the body of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Report for 1867, p. 23.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MILLENNIAL CHURCH, OR THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH'S RETURN TO HER FIRST LOVE.

Μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.—*Εφβ.* iv. 13.

Καὶ γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς.—*John* viii. 32.

‘Als *Gesammt-* oder *Endzweck* ist der Kirche Ziel: Sammlung eines Volk's Gottes, als Gemeinde Christi und seines Geistes, aus dem ganzen Menschengeschlecht als Ausführung göttlichen nicht blossen Macht-Willens, sondern eines Willens der Heiligkeit und der Liebe. Daher ist's ein, in zwiefachem Sinne *sittliches* Werden oder Sich-Vollbringen: allmälliges Umfassen und Durchdringen aller Räume und Beschaffenheiten oder Zustände: inneres Sich-auseinanderscheiden der Reichs-Fähigen und der Reichs-Unfähigen. So soll die Universalität der Christlichen Reichsanstalt einst das Menschengeschlecht der Erde umspannen, aber schon jetzt ihre Darstellung oder Wirklichkeit haben in den zu überirdischem Dasein Vollendeten im Himmel, wie in den ihm Zustrebenden auf Erde: als Eine grosse Gottes-Welt-Bewegung, welche in der Zeit beginnt, und in einer Ewigkeit sich nimmer mehr schliesst.'—NIEDNER'S *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 6.

I. THE general tendency of the foregoing inquiry is now, we trust, clear to our readers, unless we have greatly failed in our endeavours to give it appropriate expression. We have sought to present a picture of the apostolic Church in principle, and, to some extent, in detail.

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We have tried to unfold the relation of the Church's external organization to its inner life; to display the Church in the essence of her life; the conditions of that life; the Church as a world-community; particular Churches in relation to that world-community or universal Church; and, finally, the officers and offices by which the Church performs her mission as her hands and instruments.

At the outset it was assumed that the experience of Christ's Church is just the experience of her individual members upon a large scale. If there be then a possible return for the individual believer through the clouds and tempests of temptation, trial, and sorrow, through fear and doubt, falls and uprisings, through the varied lights and shades of the hidden life, to the morning of that light, peace and joy of that first love which is the Pentecostal day of the regenerated soul, but, in its return, so matured as to be freed from the childishness and imperfections of the first beginning, then, if our assumption be true, there is also possible a return for the Church from her defections, her mediæval superstitions and darkness, the bitter and uncharitable controversies by which she has been rent and torn, and from the low and rudimentary spirituality by which, alas! she has been too much characterized, to the unity, universality, light, love, and spiritual freedom which marked, at least *ideally*, her Pentecostal life. We say *ideally*, for there is no evidence that the apostolic Church, just emerged, so far as the members of which she was made up were concerned, from the darkness and pollution of heathenism and idolatry, was *actually* free from the spots and blemishes which were naturally to be looked for in such circumstances,



any more than the Christian just brought from the darkness of nature into the light of grace may be expected to be wholly free from any blemish of imperfection and sin. The *ideal* conception of such perfection in the Church's mind and heart was however, at that time, undeniably lofty, with an altitude which has never since been *practically* attained. The evidence of this is the spiritual life of the New Testament exhibited to us in the Book itself, which, like the living Word, has unquestionably a concrete and purely human and experimental side.

2. The Church's destiny, then, is to strive to reach, through the experiences of her post-apostolic, mediæval, and modern life, through the dark nights of superstition and sensuousness, through the cruel persecutions, through the cloudy days of confusion and controversy, during which she has been 'tossed with tempest, and not comforted,' till she reach her Land of Beulah, or blessed millennial condition.

3. We do not use *millennial* with any reference to the many speculations, some of them sufficiently foolish, on which men have adventured in attempting to expound prophecy. It is convenient as a term having reference to future things, and as such we use it to express the expected joy and felicity of the Church's future.

4. In our preceding chapter reference was made to the *principles* by which the Church was to be regulated as laid down by Christ and His Apostles. The question came up, What are these principles? The question, or rather the proper answering of it, will be found to be of the greatest importance, since it is precisely by these principles, in the *practice* and *embodiment* of them, that the Church must advance to that unity of

faith and knowledge, or recognition of Christ, which is to be the 'full perfection of her nature,' 'the measure of the stature of the fulness of her risen Redeemer.' These principles then, to proceed by way of exclusion, cannot in their nature be *contingent*. They cannot refer merely to the passing circumstances and accidents of the Church's outward life. They go deeper even than the prophecy which will fail, the tongues which will cease, or 'the knowledge which will vanish away<sup>1</sup>.' If they appertained to this sphere, they could not belong to the whole duration of the Church's being; they would be finite and not infinite in their *duration*, *contingent* and not *necessary* in their application, and *partial* and not *universal* in their bearing.

5. It has ever been held to be a test of intuitive and self-evident principles, that they should bear the marks of *immediacy*, *universality*, and *necessity*. They should not be secondary in their derivation, partial in their application, or accidental in their relation to that which they underlie. Of such character ought to be the principles which work forward to the continued growth and endless progress toward perfection of Christ's Church.

6. One such principle is noted in the chapter of God's Word to which reference has just been made. 'Charity never faileth.' Love, then, which is the central attribute of the Divine nature, is also the central principle of His Church. Around this immutable principle, all the other principles and attributes of the Church's life must cluster. Love, to flow forward continuously and harmoniously as the central

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

principle of the Church's life, must be free from all stain or pollution; in other words, it must be holy.

7. Holiness, then, is the second of the principles of which we are in search. And here, again, she is like her Lord. As He is love, so also He is light.

8. But a love which is perfectly free from imperfection or stain, in intelligents, must be one: we cannot figure it to ourselves as breaking up into fragments, or being other than a principle of unity. Not that it may not consist with a most glorious *diversity*, as the Trinity in Unity, and the infinity of attributes in the nature of God. Unity, then, is a *third* principle which must characterize the life of Christ's Church. As this unity in number, however, cannot be figured but as embracing *all* redeemed souls, it passes, therefore, necessarily into *universality*, as containing *every* redeemed one out of *all* kindreds and tongues, and peoples and nations. With unity, therefore, may be conjoined *universality*, as the third of the principles whereof we are in search.

9. The one and universal holy love, which is the central principle of the Church, as it is also of the Divine nature, must finally be *permanent* in its character. While it may assume different forms and display various external accidents, there must be an unchangeableness in its purpose and working. And so Scripture informs us that there was but one unchangeable purpose of love running through the Patriarchal times, Mosaism, the period of the Prophets, and Christianity. There was but the one, the 'everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.' This unchangeableness of purpose is a third principle operative in the essential life of the Church.

10. These, then, are the principles of which we are

in search—love, holiness, and unity in number, time, and place; or unity, unchangeableness, and universality.

11. Furthermore, from the combination of these, other conditions arise. As the life of the Church is that of free intelligents held to God and each other by that love which in its perfection casts out all fear, their relation to each other, and God as their Father, will be one of *spiritual freedom*. Hence all tyranny, whether by constraint through force of an external kind, or by superstition, as by bannings and cursings, is excluded.

This bears very closely upon the nature and character of the government and organization to be established in Christ's Church. There cannot be masters or lords. One is the Master, even Christ, and that by a bond of love; all the rest are brethren. This does not however exclude *officials*, any more than it did in apostolic times.

12. How far then, it may be asked, were these principles carried out in the apostolic Church? In that Church there was unity, for however widely the members might be scattered, yet they recognised only one God, one Lord and Saviour, one faith, and one baptism, and one family in heaven, and on earth joined to the great Father, of which individually they were members. This unity was not violated, nay rather enriched and diversified by variety of local customs and usages, in different countries and nations, taking of necessity the colour and hue of the national life.

13. We find *love* to have been a predominating characteristic of the life of the apostolic Church. This was the rallying cry which won them hearts, even when they lay dying in the arena, under the teeth

of the wild beasts, less ferocious and cruel than the eyes which gleamed upon them from the crowded benches above, gloating on their sufferings. ‘Behold these Christians how they love one another!’

14. There was also holiness, which contrasted wondrously—although the aspiration after it assumed the fantastic forms of monasticism and asceticism—with the filthy impurity of the Pagan nature-worship.

15. But without further applying these principles to the apostolic Church, let us ask how the modern Churches, by the application of these principles, may attain to a love, a holiness, a unity, and universality far higher, because more ripe and mature, than were exhibited in the life of the apostolic Church.

16. The only path to this is through a *practical embodiment* of light and love, through unity, universality, and spiritual freedom, into which they are necessarily developed. The religion of *fact* must be reached by rising above the religion of *form*. It will be found that the narrow particularisms which mar the Church’s unity, impede her progress, sully her purity by the bad passion they evoke, and cool her love, are just the circumcisions and the uncircumcisions which Paul denounces as nothing and unavailing, when contrasted with the faith working by love, to the growth of the new creature.

17. There is no necessity for striving after that mere external unity which so fascinated the mediæval Church, and exerts a baneful influence over the modern denominations—the craving for *uniformity*. A grand federal union of Christendom is doubtless a possibility which ought ever to be kept in view, and which the Churches will steadily work forward to, as they learn

the great law of human brotherhood after a practical and not merely theoretical fashion.

Uniformity is not desirable, because it would only tend to impoverish the life of the Church. Nations, as our own, are the better for the variety of peoples which have blended together to form the national life. The apostolic Churches were greatly the better that the outward accidents of their Church life varied as the regions they inhabited, and the national life whose hues it wore. This external diversity did not destroy their common feeling of unity, and it gave richness, variety, and fertility to the Church's being and nature.

18. When the modern denominations will learn that types of piety may exist in the different religious bodies, varying somewhat in accidentals, but equally well-pleasing to God, then they will cease from the lawless relation which they occupy to each other, and seek the 'unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.'

19. But unity is only possible through growth in holiness and love. It is from the root of superstition, darkness, and fear, which fill the human heart in its natural state in relation to God, that the spiritual tyranny, the worship of forms, the particularisms which distract and divide the Church spring. One idolizes forms of prayer, another hates them; one rejoices in vestments, a second in peculiarities of praise; one can only sing hymns, another only psalms; the greater number cannot square their intellectual interpretations of God's Word and the spiritual life exactly with those of their neighbours, and therefore they must treat them as 'heathen men and publicans.'

But we need not enumerate more of the 'beggarly elements,' the circumcisions and uncircumcisions, the

yoke of bondage under which modern Christendom groans. They are all, we repeat, the offspring of superstition, generated by darkness and fear; as are also those forms of spiritual tyranny which are likewise, alas! far from uncommon.

The path by which to reach this goal—a grand federal Christendom, united and yet separated, existing externally in multiplied federations, and yet all converging towards a common centre, in the lofty IDEAL of the Holy Catholic Church—on the part of the Anglican and International Moral Science Association, is the combination with the principles just evolved, of the principles of *Christian moral science*. There is a science to the unrenewed man, and this is essentially Godless and materialistic; for every unregenerate man is, at heart, a materialist. He believes essentially in a universe without God, and in a body without a soul. ‘The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither *can* he know them, for they are spiritually discerned<sup>1</sup>.’

But there is also a *Christian science* of which the renewed nature is capable, because the new nature within reflects light upon the things which are without<sup>2</sup>. The aim and object of this Christian science is the *truth*—‘that truth,’ in all its fulness, which ‘makes free.’

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Delitsch on Genesis, first German edition, pp. 302 sqq., for some good observations on this point. He says, among other things, ‘*The subjective criterion of a fact of revelation is the personal experience of the new birth.*’

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This is the solvent which, applied to the particularisms, the superstitious forms, and the fetishisms of Christendom, will at length dissolve them so as to 'leave not a rack behind.'

The object, we say, of this Christian science is *truth*; and truth is akin to holiness, therefore is this science akin to holiness. Let this powerful solvent be applied to dissolve the bonds and fetters of papal superstition, by which, more or less, all branches of the universal Church are held in chains.

When this is done, the captives will arise; they will see eye to eye, and beginning to work together harmoniously towards the realization of the great ideal, they will '*all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*'





ESSAY II.

WHAT IS THE UNITY  
OF THE  
VISIBLE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

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ἵνα πάντες ἐν ᾧσι καθὼς σὺ, Πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ γὰρ ἐν σοί.—*John*  
xvii. 21.

‘Cedat consuetudo veritati.’—*Augustine.*

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## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.—THE PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH UNION UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT DISPENSATIONS ; OR, THE RELATION OF POSITIVE INSTITUTIONS OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP TO THE PATRIARCHAL AND MOSAIC ECONOMIES.

ALL truth, like God its Author, is eternal and unchangeable. But though in itself, that is essentially, it is ever the same, it may admit of much modification in the expression of it. The same truth may be expressed by different formulæ, and may be seen in different lights by different minds, and to each mind it will assume the hue of the discerning power. To one it may look nothing like the same as it does to another, because the observer's mind may be more clouded with prejudice, or have a narrower grasp, or smaller powers of discernment, than the other. One man may see but a small part of some beautiful landscape, or look at it from a wrong standpoint, and think it uninteresting and bare ; another may behold it covered with cloud, and think it dingy and confused ; a third may have a mind unable to grasp but its mere outline, and incapable of appreciating its fine proportions ; but it is evident these partial views of the

landscape cannot in any way affect its essential character. So, whatever is essentially true, whether it belong to the region of philosophy or science or religion, must be so at all times and under all circumstances, however it may seem to change when viewed under the party-coloured variable powers of the human mind.

Religious truth, like mathematical, may be expressed under a variety of forms adapted to the capabilities of different minds, without its essential properties being impaired. You may work out some mathematical problem either by geometrical or algebraical formulæ, and, although the process of proof appear very dissimilar, you express at the end the same mathematical truth by both. So religious truth may be set before us, either literally in its naked sense, or figuratively by type, symbol, or prophecy, but in substance it is still the same. Take, for instance, that grand central truth of the Christian scheme, the doctrine of the Atonement, or Christ's substitution in the room of sinners. This was literally realized when the Saviour offered Himself up on the Cross in the fulness of time; but in the ages preceding, it was prefigured by such types as the daily sacrifice in the tabernacle or temple, the killing of the paschal lamb, and sprinkling of its blood by the Israelites on the lintels and doorposts of their houses; the sending away of the scapegoat into the wilderness with the sins of Israel confessed over its head, while the other was offered as a sin-offering, and the like. And in Gospel times, this same truth is symbolized to us by the breaking of the bread and pouring out of the wine in the feast of the Holy Supper. Thus, the same

religious truth, presented to the minds of men in different ages of the world and under widely different circumstances, has been wisely adapted by its Divine Author to the many-sided aspects of man's religious consciousness. If men were tied down in all ages to the same mode of comprehending or expressing truth, or to the same forms and institutions that embody it, under all the different mental and moral conditions of the human race, Christian liberty would be but another name for spiritual slavery. 'If we look at Christianity historically,' says the author of 'Guesses at Truth,' 'it is at once unchangeable and changeable, at once constant and progressive. Were it not unchangeable and constant, it could not be the manifestation of Him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Were it not changeable and progressive, it would not be suited to him (man) with whom to-day is not like yesterday, nor to-morrow like to-day. Therefore it is both at once: one in its essence and changeless as coming from God; manifold and variable in its workings as designed to pervade and hallow every phase and element of man's being, his thoughts, his words, his deeds, his imagination, his reason, his affections, his duties.' This distinction between the unchangeable and the changeable in Christianity—between the great unchangeable truths of God constituting the essence of religion, and the changeable modes of its manifestation in order to its being adapted to the variable conditions of man—has often been lost sight of by Churches as well as individual Christians, resulting in an unnecessary separation of Christian societies from one another. Some men talk of the progress of religion, meaning thereby the essential truths of re-

ligion, as if there should be new discoveries of Divine truth made to the world, as there are new discoveries in the arts and sciences, forgetting that religious truth being perfect as its Author, and the volume of revelation being closed, there can now be no farther unfolding of spiritual doctrine to man—that in Scripture itself it is set forth as in striking contrast with all earthly things, ‘All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.’ Others fight about the outward forms in which Christianity embodies itself, as if they were not merely the external embodiment of religious truth, but that unchanging truth itself, and thus elevate into a religious principle to be fought for, and isolating them from the communion and sympathy of their fellow Christians, what is merely an outward adaptation or proper framework of religious truth, devised for the suitable manifestation of it. We sometimes speak, indeed, with propriety of the progress of religion, but this only in its relative, not its absolute, sense; meaning by it, the progress which it makes in the human heart or in societies, subduing them under its influence; while we may also speak with propriety of the vast importance of religious institutions, as the proper vehicles for embodying and propagating the truth. In what follows, we shall endeavour to keep the distinction we have indicated between the constant and unchangeable truths of God’s Word, and the ever-varying modes of their outward expression, clearly in view; and to show that, while the spiritual doctrines of religion are always the same, so that men in all ages can discern them as a fixed point, there

are certain clearly ascertained principles which regulate their outward manifestation; in other words, that the outward forms that embody them are capable of adaptation to the ever-varying conditions of Christian society. If we can thus clearly keep in view the distinction between the permanent and changeable in Christianity, and lay down those principles which, under the guidance of an all-wise Providence, have in past ages governed the relations of doctrinal truth to positive Christian institutions, we may be able to draw therefrom a suitable basis of Christian union which may help to form a grand Association of all evangelical Christian Churchmen in the present age. The attempt may be difficult; it may even be hazardous, as running contrary to the prejudices of some good men in every Church: but considering the evils to the world and to the cause of Christianity that have arisen from the isolation of Christian Churches, and from the want of joint action against the common foe, it is worthy of consideration, even though the only effect should be to prove the *possibility* of a Christian Association for the Promotion of Christian Moral Science.

The Book of Revelation and the Book of Providence are the two great sources of our knowledge of the laws and constitution of the Church of Christ, for God has ever governed His Church in conformity with the laws He has revealed; and while we study the one for the principles of His Church government, we must study the other for the mode in which He has carried them out. The true philosophy of history is that which the Bible supplies. It not only furnishes us with facts which are the groundwork of all history, but shows



us God, as it were, behind the machine of Providence, guiding the movements of every wheel and arm, and overruling all for His own glory. Any other theory for the solution of events only presents us with a tangled web of human affairs, which no art of man can unravel—such a series of unintelligible movements, of revolutions and counter-revolutions, as one sees when looking at the movements of a great army from a level plain; but which appear all order and beauty when the spectator looks at them from an elevated position. We can only read the Book of Providence by reading it in the light of the Bible and according to the philosophy which it exhibits. For it clearly shows us the world governed in the interests of Christianity—all things created by Jesus for Him, in order to display His wisdom, power, and love. We search, then, the Bible for the doctrines of His Church and the principles upon which He has founded it, but we need equally to search the records of Divine Providence to ascertain the relation of those doctrines and principles to the world.

Let us glance, then, very briefly at the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations under the Old Testament economy, as institutions for the embodiment of Divine truth and in relation to the principles of Church unity they contain, by way of introduction to our subject.

Before the promulgation of Divine laws to the Jews as a nation, we are presented in the Old Testament with what may be called the 'Family Church,' or ecclesiastical constitution by families. This form of Church government seems to have prevailed from the time of the Fall to the Flood: but it is after this great event that we have anything like a clear insight into

its nature and working. In the Patriarchal ages succeeding the Deluge, we find that each family, or often cluster of families related to each other, had its spiritual ruler in the Patriarch or chief of the tribe, who offered the sacrifices, performed the other priestly duties, and maintained the spirit of religion among all those over whom his influence extended; and as he thus stood to all in the double relation of Father and Priest, in the one claiming their filial obedience and respect, in the other, their reverence as a minister of religion, he must not only have wielded over them a powerful influence, but have been a visible centre of religious unity to all the related families who dwelt around him—a central sun round whom all the members of that early Church revolved. By this means God preserved the knowledge of Himself in the earth and handed it down from generation to generation, during those rude ages of the world in which His chosen people had no national embodiment and existed only in isolated families. Yet though the knowledge and worship of God were preserved only in a few families; sometimes only in one, never did He leave Himself without a witness. The Divine light enkindled from heaven burned on from generation to generation, sometimes reduced to a single flame, yet never wholly extinguished. In those ages of the Patriarchal or Family Church, the hopes of a coming Saviour were principally kept alive by direct revelations from heaven, made to isolated individuals, even as the Church itself then existed in an isolated condition. The vital truths of religion then revealed, and the laws of the constitution of the Church, were few and simple, but exactly suited to the rude and

infant condition of the Church. Anything like the cumbersome and complicated rites and constitution of the Jewish Church would evidently have been quite unsuited to the Patriarchal age. Thus the small number of religious doctrines revealed and the extreme simplicity of the forms of Church government prevented anything like variety of opinion and diversity of religious action; the principle of visible Church unity being intimately allied with blood relationship and family ties.

The Jewish Church, the principles of whose constitution we are now about to consider, differed very materially from the Patriarchal. Here were multitudes of families, though of one race, yet widely diversified in disposition, habits, rank, education, and the like, all comprehended in one national existence, and all united in the worship of the one true God. It is therefore evident that the Family Church constitution of Patriarchal times would have been utterly unsuited to the Jews as a nation—that the independent form of Church government, each family for itself, would not only have been a fruitful source of disorganization, but would by and by have resulted in the decline of religion altogether, from there being no common centre of spiritual influence to bind the various families together. A new religious constitution was consequently necessary for the Jews as a nation, unless the knowledge and worship of the true God were to be confined to a few families as before, in other words, unless religion were to maintain but a bare existence in the world. This new code of laws and religious constitution which God gave to the Jewish nation from Mount Sinai was evidently in-

tended to answer a twofold purpose:—(1) To be a witness for Himself in the hearts and lives of His chosen people; (2) To develop their faith in a coming Saviour. In the constitution of the Jewish Church we find, as a framework to God's eternal and unchangeable moral code, a vast and complicated system of positive law, intended, among other reasons, as a test of the people's obedience, much the reason of which they could not understand, yet claiming their reverence and regard on the simple ground of God's sovereign will and mighty interpositions on their behalf. Being, as the Apostle Paul represents them<sup>1</sup>, in a state of pupilage, or children 'under tutors and governors,' it was natural that they should be disciplined to obedience by a system of laws, which, though they could not fully understand the reason of them, they were to receive as from a Father who knew their needs and tenderly loved them. There may be many commands laid upon a child by his parent, the reason of which he cannot understand, but which, if filled with a filial spirit, he will cheerfully obey, finding in the approval of his conscience, and in the delight he yields to his parent, a due reward. Another object evidently intended by this minute and cumbersome system of positive law, and that which is more to our present purpose, was the maintenance of visible unity in the Jewish Church. Where the outward constitution and internal government were laid down with such strictness and minuteness by God Himself, there was no room left for dissent or schism in the Church. Every case of dissent was here an instance of direct disobedience to the sovereign Lawgiver and Head.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 1-4.

For any one, not the High Priest, to enter within the veil into the holy of holies; for a priest to offer strange fire upon the altar, which God had not commanded, as Nadab and Abihu; for a layman to offer sacrifice, as Saul, or burn incense before the Lord, as Jeroboam, or for any one to assume the office of a prophet without a Divine call, or in any way alter the ecclesiastical constitution so minutely laid down by law,—was not only an error but a crime, which was often visited with the severest penalties, yea, with death itself. While the Israelites were bound together as regards their spiritual life by the acknowledgment and worship of the one living and true God, their unity as a Church was maintained by strict adherence to a Divinely ordained ecclesiastical constitution, so minutely laid down that every outward act of worship was regulated, and from which there could be no lawful deviation. If you asked a Jew for the symbols of the visible unity of his Church, he could point to the tabernacle standing in the centre of the great encampment of the tribes, or the temple rearing its head on Mount Moriah, to which all worshippers reverently turned their faces in prayer; to the uniform mode of expiation for sin which all were bound strictly to observe; to the three great Feasts of Passover, and Tabernacles, and Pentecost, which every Israelite was bound to keep with unfailing regularity; or, in general, to the great code of ecclesiastical law which regulated matters of worship down to the most minute particular. Here was, therefore, a visible Church unity arranged for and directly enforced by God Himself, where schism was regarded as a direct rebellion against Him.

It will be a mistake, however, to suppose that in the

ecclesiastical constitution of the Jews, so minutely laid down on Sinai, there was no room left for development, and that in the continued history of the Jewish nation it admitted of no change to suit the altered circumstances of the times. This is true, indeed, in reference to its leading principles, which were destined to remain a part of the Jewish ecclesiastical economy, till abrogated by the setting up of the Redeemer's kingdom: but, in reference to many minor points, it was not so. For example, the Paschal lamb, which at first was commanded to be killed at each one's home, had afterwards to be sacrificed 'at the place which the Lord their God should choose to place His name in<sup>1</sup>;' that is, at the tabernacle or temple; and the seat of worship and daily sacrifice, which was at first moveable from place to place, was finally to be transferred to Jerusalem. Again, in the constitution of the tabernacle worship, there was no place for music, vocal or instrumental, probably because, in the unsettled state of the Jews, music as an art was then little cultivated; the single exception in the use of music for sacred purposes being, that two priests were to blow with silver trumpets; 'In the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God<sup>2</sup>.' But by the time of David's reign, we have clear evidence of the Divine command for the establishment of a magnificent musical accompaniment in the worship of God, both vocal and instrumental, which attained its climax in the age of

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xvi. 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Num. x. 10.

Solomon, at the opening services of the temple, and which, after suffering a temporary decay, was again revived by Hezekiah<sup>1</sup>. Here was a new service in the worship of God, Divinely ordained to be introduced at a time when the nation had attained its highest state of civilization, and for which there was no provision in the first constitution of the Church given to the Israelites on Mount Sinai. And again, though the temple was the Divinely appointed place at first for all congregational worship, yet, after the return of the Jews from captivity, when their outward condition seems considerably to have changed, we find synagogues for congregational worship starting up over the country, where the Jews assembled weekly for the worship of God, especially for reading and expounding the Law. Whether these, as some have supposed, were instituted by Ezra under the Divine sanction, or whether they were gradually introduced during the Captivity to meet a felt want for congregational worship, and thence transferred to Palestine on the return of the Jews, as seems very likely, matters little to our argument, for they were patronized and regularly resorted to by the Saviour, and hence had the Divine approval. The same may be said of the Feast of Dedication, instituted, as is generally supposed, by the Maccabees in commemoration of their cleansing the temple of the pollutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, and which, though not a part of the original ecclesiastical constitution of the Jews, seems to have been kept by Christ Himself, as we may conjecture from John x. 22, 23. Thus it was, that although the ecclesiastical

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Chron. xxxiii. 5, compared with 2 Chron. v. 12, 13, and xxix. 25.

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constitution of the Jews was minutely appointed by God, and, in order to maintain a visible Church unity, was regulated even to the most minute particular, yet, viewed historically, it had a certain expansive power which rendered it capable of being adapted to the progressive civilization and growing spiritual wants of the Jewish nation.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE RELATION OF THE MOSAIC TO THE CHRISTIAN ECONOMY, AS REGARDS THE PRINCIPLES OF THEIR ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTION.

WE have seen in the previous chapter how well adapted the outward forms of religion were to the various conditions of religious society, Patriarchal and Jewish, under the Old Testament dispensation; and how, notwithstanding the minute regulations Divinely appointed for the conduct of Divine worship, there was left room for a certain amount of *development*, suited to the gradually advancing state of the people. But we are now about to proceed to the important inquiry into the principle of unity in the Christian Church, where we shall have religious truth exhibited under widely different conditions, and consequently the introduction of new principles in its outward manifestation; and, in order to help us in our inquiry, it will be needful to compare the relation of the Jewish ecclesiastical constitution with that of the Christian, and point out some of the most striking contrasts between them. Between the two dispensations themselves there are three striking differences, which we might well expect, in the infinite wisdom

of God, would be embodied in ecclesiastical organizations widely differing in their principles, viz. a difference in *extent*, *duration*, and *spirituality*.

1. A difference in reference to their *extent*. Before the coming of Christ, the Church of God and the kingdom of sin had certain well-defined boundaries, if we may so speak,—the former being contented with maintaining its own position, without making encroachment on the other. The Church of the Jews confined its attention to the Jewish nation, while the great kingdom of Satan lay outside of it unassailed. The Jewish religious institutions were evidently not meant for the propagation of religion outside the Church, but solely, or almost solely, for the maintenance of it among the Jewish people. Hence, the number of proselytes to the Jewish faith from the heathen was comparatively few, and chiefly confined to those who were sojourning in Palestine, and who freely adopted the religion without missionary influence. Thus, it would seem almost as if the Jewish religion and the kingdom of sin existed side by side, by way of experiment—the one to exhibit to the world the blessings of the worship of the one true God, the other to exhibit the degrading influences of idolatry even under the most favourable circumstances. But the conditions of Christianity, as is well known, are widely different. Its very first principle is aggressiveness: it exists by its efforts made against the kingdom of sin, and has for its ultimate object its entire subjugation. It is confined within no special territory. Its field is the world; its aim the Christianizing of the whole human race. It is adapted not merely for one people, adopting the same customs,

speaking the same language, and governed by the same civil laws. It embraces all peoples, of every variety of race, colour, language, character, and civil institutions. It has for its mission to make disciples of all nations; and, in point of fact, its triumphs have been already gained in every quarter of the habitable earth.

2. A second distinction between the two institutions, and intimately connected with the previous, is in reference to their *duration*. The Patriarchal and the Jewish dispensations were but temporary expedients, designed for the double purpose of keeping up religious life among God's ancient people, and of ushering in a better dispensation. The Jews were, as already remarked on Gal. iv. 1-6, in a state of pupilage with reference to the world's fully-developed manhood, and consequently as a nation they were, when the fulness of time was come, to cast off, as it were, the religious garments of their youth, and assume the robes of a fully-developed Christianity. That which is intended to answer but a temporary purpose, will not be finished on the same principles as that which is intended to be permanent. The scaffolding which is raised for the purpose of erecting some beautiful and lofty structure, and which is to be taken down when the building is completed, will not be finished with the same nicety or with the same regard to show and permanence as the structure itself. Nor will the shell which the young mollusc is to cast aside on reaching a larger size, have the same power of expansion as that which is to grow with its growth and suit itself to all the varieties of the creature's future life. So the outer

framework of the Jewish Church, in which the vital truths of religion were embodied, and which was intended to serve a temporary purpose, and to be confined to one country and people speaking the same language, would not need to be so expansive or so general in its character, as that which was to embrace the whole world and continue through all time. In fact, one great purpose of the religious institutions of the Jews seems to have been to shut them out from communion with the rest of the world and to make them a peculiar people, that they might be a standing monument to all the world of the blessings of monotheism. This will appear natural, necessary, and wise, if the temporary object intended to be served by the Jewish Church be steadily kept in view.

But, as distinguished from this, the Christian Church was not only to have a wider range, embracing the whole world in its purpose, but a greater duration; outliving not merely any nation with which it was primarily connected, but lasting to the end of time, as expressed in the parting commission of the Redeemer to His disciples: 'Go ye and make disciples of all nations; . . . and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'

Another distinction we may observe between the Jewish and Christian dispensations has reference to their *spirituality*. The Jewish religion, in its setting forth the essentials of Divine truth, appealed much to the outward senses, just as, before the reflective powers of man are fully developed, the education of the young is chiefly conducted by impressions from the outer world. The communion between the wor-

shipper and his God was maintained very much through outward rites and the agency of a fellow-creature, the officiating priest; access to a throne of grace was gained by the sacrifice of animals on the appointed altar; the Deity Himself was, as it were, localized in the holy of holies, and manifested by material symbols. The most sacred of the worshipper's associations, his deepest religious aspirations, could not be divorced from temple rites and a sensuous worship. Instead of looking directly with the eye of faith at the spiritual heavens, and beholding with open face the glory of the Lord, the Jewish worshipper had to look upon them through the veil of earthly rites and symbols, which obscured their essential glory. But, however glorious in itself this grand system of earthly shadows and symbols of spiritual truth, it was so far exceeded by the Christian dispensation, that it 'had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.' For the Christian worshipper, through the Redeemer's mediation, is permitted to come into immediate contact with the Object of his religious adoration, and to behold with open face the glory of the Lord. His Mediator is not a frail human creature, visible to his bodily senses, himself obliged to approach the mercy-seat with confession of his sins and blood of beasts, but the adorable God-man, seated on a throne of mercy, seen only by the spiritual eye, and invested with a thousand spiritual glories. Claiming the highest reverence and love of the human spirit, without the intervention of earthly rites, so that in the exercise of this spiritual worship, in this immediate contact of the human spirit with the Divine, the worshipper's

heart is elevated and purified, and raised above the influence of the material and sensible.

Adopting, then, this view of the distinction between the Jewish and the Christian dispensations, that the latter is more spiritual in its character, that it is far more enduring, and more extensive in its influence, we should conjecture *a priori* regarding it, in the first place:—

1. That its positive institutions would be *few* and *simple*. A large number of positive religious institutions, whether ceremonial or otherwise, strictly enjoined on the consciences of the worshippers, would not be suitable to a religion which was to travel over the whole world, and mingle itself with every phase of human character and every condition of human life. They would only be an obstacle to the propagation of religion, and to the maintenance of it when so propagated. At the same time, it would, humanly speaking, be impossible to fix upon a large number of positive institutions which would be suited to the genius of each particular people or age, which would suit the rude tribes just emerging into civilization, equally with the highly civilized, and would not materially interfere with the necessary duties of life. Such a religious code as that of the Jews could only be suitable for a people enjoying a particular climate, inhabiting a country under one government, and under the special protection of God.

Nor will this view be weakened, but rather strengthened, if we consider the Christian religion as destined by its Divine Author to last through all time, as well as to spread over the whole family of man. Whether there be a gradual progress in the ages—an infancy,

youth, and manhood of the world's life, as some assert; or whether there be cycles of progress or decay; or whether there be any ascertained relation between the march of time and the condition of civilization, this we know as a fact, that each age differs widely from another in knowledge, civilization, and even in moral characteristics, and that the outward institutions of one age, often do not suit the necessities of another. There are only two things that may be said to remain alike in all ages—the eternal truth of God, and the natural heart of man, with its feelings, desires, and obstinate will. Whatever is outward is merely relative, and liable to constant change. It is evident, then, that in such a constantly changing condition of society, unlike in one age what it is in another, a large number of positive rites or religious symbols (not of the very essence of religion), which never change, would be not only unsuitable, but even mischievous, would hamper the development of spiritual truth, and, while maintaining an apparent unity, would be productive of constant divisions in the Church.

2. Again, secondly, we should conjecture from the contrast between the Jewish and Christian dispensations in point of extension, duration, and spirituality, not only that the positive rites of the latter should be comparatively few and simple, but that it should be distinguished by a principle of *expansiveness*. The form of Church government and ritual that would suit a highly-civilized state of society, might be unsuitable for one that is rude and uncivilized; or that which was best for the first ages of the Church, might not be the best for after times. Contrast the

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condition of the world at the first promulgation of Christianity with its present, and you will see that the same outward forms for embodying the truth, and the same ecclesiastical institutions for preserving and extending it, could not be suitable for both; that the religion of Christ at its first propagation, when it was professed by only a few in each country or city, and subjected to the bitterest persecution while it was fighting its way amid the opposition of the surrounding idolatry, must have had different relations to the world from what it has in any Christian country in the present age, when it is professed by a whole people, and established in time-honoured institutions. Without some great expansive power in its outward institutions, it could not adapt itself to the ever-varying conditions of society in every age. It would be as impossible to have the whole world under one system of civil government, and in the same condition of civilization, as to have one ecclesiastical polity for Britain, for India, for Australia, and for the Christian islands in the Southern Ocean. But, as we have seen the principle of development even in the sacred code and ritual of the Jewish Church, where everything external in the worship and Church government was regulated by Divine appointment; as we have seen a change in the place of celebrating the Passover, the introduction in later times of a grand musical accompaniment to the public service, and also the establishment of synagogues in the later ages of the Jewish nation,—so, much more may we expect a development of outward institutions and a proper adaptation of religious forms to the progress of religious truth in the Christian scheme.



## CHAPTER III.

PRINCIPLES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND RITES OF THE NEW  
TESTAMENT CHURCH, AS EXPOUNDED BY CHRIST AND HIS  
APOSTLES, A PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN UNION.

READING, as we have done, the Jewish religious institutions and the principles of their development by the light of history, and deducing therefrom the nature of religious union under the Old Testament dispensation; contrasting also, as we did in the previous chapter, the Jewish and Christian Churches in relation to the objects served by each,—we are now in a position to enter on an examination of the New Testament for the character of the institutions in which the Gospel doctrine is embodied, by which we shall ascertain whether our *a priori* deductions are confirmed, and also on what grounds a Christian union under the New Testament dispensation can be based.

If we examine, in the first place, the Gospels to see what discoveries they make of the ecclesiastical constitution and positive rites of the Redeemer's kingdom, we shall find them remarkably few and simple. Indeed, considering the infinite importance of that kingdom He was about to set up, considering that His own view of it, frequently expressed, was that it was to extend over all the world and last through all time,

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we may at first sight be surprised that He did not hedge it round much more with positive laws. If it be argued that while the Redeemer was on earth, His Church was but in its infancy, and that, considering the ignorance of all about Him of its true nature, it would not have been expedient to lay down rules which could neither be understood nor acted upon; to this it may be answered, that the same objection would lie against His promulgating during His lifetime moral truth, which only excited the prejudices of His hearers, and which was not then understood, and perhaps is not yet fully understood by Christians of the present age. Did not God promulgate from Mount Sinai in the infancy of the Jewish Church not only the precepts of the moral law, but a very systematic and extensive system of ceremonial rites and ecclesiastical constitutions, which could not be fully understood nor acted upon when the nation was still in a rudimentary state? And, though it might not have been expedient for Jesus to promulgate a complete system of Church government Himself, it would have been easy for Him to communicate the same to the Apostles, but, as we shall by and by see, He gave them no such commission. He might have given to His disciples a large number of positive precepts for the government of His Church, which they would understand and carry out when the Spirit from on high was poured out upon them. It was not essential, even, that they should understand at the time the rules of His Church polity, any more than they understood the spiritual nature of His kingdom during His lifetime. But we search for any such minute details in the Gospels in vain. In fact, the principles He promulgated during His lifetime regarding

His kingdom may be summed up in the following few particulars:—

1. That it was to be spiritual, and not of this world. John xviii. 36.

2. That it was to embrace the whole world in its range, and last to the end of time. Matt. xiii. 38, xxiv. 14, xxviii. 19, 20.

3. That it was to be propagated by the agency of the Apostles and their successors, and also by every individual Christian. Matt. xxviii. 19, and v. 14, 16.

4. That its development was to be from within outwards, and its unity a spiritual one. Luke xvii. 20, 21; John xvii. 11, 21.

In addition to these general principles of His kingdom, which were to distinguish it from all earthly kingdoms, we find the Redeemer instructing His disciples regarding the means that were to secure its perpetuation and prosperity. These were, (1) the conditions of its propagation, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,’ with which command is associated the promise, ‘Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world;’ so that there can never be a period when the Gospel would not be faithfully preached, nor a right proclamation of it, which does not secure the promise of the Saviour’s presence and help. (2) The conditions of Christian discipleship. These are—Baptism, separating the followers of Christ from the whole unchristian world, and enclosing them within the fold of the visible Church; and the Lord’s Supper, separating them from all scandalous and mere formal professors, and uniting all true disciples in the bond of a common love to one another and to their risen Lord; forming together the only two sym-

bolical rites of the Christian Church, simple in their nature and universal in their application, and admirably suited to the ever-varying conditions of Christian society to the end of time. For while the rites themselves are commanded<sup>1</sup>, there are no restrictions as to time, manner, or place of celebration, provided the mere essentials of the Sacraments are retained. Either a more complicated system of symbols, or more minute regulations in the observance of the two Sacraments as to time, place, or outward form, would evidently have been unsuited for all ages of the world; they might have suited the first, but not the succeeding; one condition of Christian society, but not another. Therefore they are simple and free from embarrassing restrictions; they are striking as symbols, suggestive of the grand realities of the Christian life, and impressive from their very simplicity. And herein we see, as we have seen in the Divinely constituted and complicated system of the Jewish Church, a wide adaptation of the external embodiments of religion to the conditions of religious society. When a son is in a state of pupilage, the parent prescribes to him strict positive rules: he must do this and abstain from that; have so many hours for lessons, so much time for sleep and play, and the like; but, when he has emerged into manhood, these positive rules give place to general principles of conduct, which are to regulate all the manifestations of his life. So, the Jewish people being children in bondage under the rudiments of the world, were governed by arbitrary laws; but now, in the fulness of time, believers being admitted under the Christian dispensation to the full privileges of sons, are

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xi. 23-27.

governed by general principles which regulate their whole social and individual life. It would therefore have been out of place to entail the Jewish yoke of bondage on Christian nations, and hence we find the instructions of the Redeemer concerning the constitution of His kingdom confined to great general principles of universal application and to the introduction of two positive rites of the simplest sort. Its manifestation was to be from within outward, and being so, wherever it was vitally manifested, it would, under the general principles promulgated, seek for itself suitable outward conditions, just as the full and fervent heart, subject to the general laws of speech, finds suitable language for the utterance of its emotions.

From this brief consideration of the outward constitution of the Christian Church, as laid down by Christ Himself, pass we now to a review of its worship and government as founded by the Apostles. Their labours are briefly recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and also incidentally alluded to in the various Epistles they wrote to the Churches they had founded. No one can carefully read, with unprejudiced mind, the Acts and the Epistles, without observing how small a portion of them is occupied with the rules of outward Church polity. The founders of the Christian Church are, indeed, most careful in their statement and inculcation of the essential doctrines of the Christian faith, and of all the moral duties which flow from them. In regard to the private and social duties of the Christian life, they enter into the most minute detail, teaching Christians how they ought to deport themselves as parents, children, husbands, wives, masters, servants, subjects,

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and fellow-Christians; they insist largely upon the exercise of charity in conduct and in judgment; they warn against the influence of false teachers, and lay down tests by which they may be distinguished from the true, and the like. Even in reference to the inner life and practices of the Church, they give many and most minute directions: as regards the use of marriage and the proper exercise of spiritual gifts; the exercise of discipline, and the relation of Christians to the Jewish ceremonial law and idolatrous customs; the necessity and mode of contributing to the saints, and the qualifications of bishops, deacons, and other offices of the Church. But, in reference to outward organization of the Christian Church, that is, the form in which the religious life of Christian society was to be embodied, we find nothing like the same definite detail; only a few general principles laid down, a few incidental allusions to their own plan, a few hints thrown out here and there, chiefly as to the transmission of the ministerial office. ‘Neither Christ Himself,’ says Mosheim in his *Church History*, ‘nor His holy Apostles, have commanded anything clearly or expressly concerning the external form of the Church, and the precise method according to which it should be governed. From this we may infer that the regulation of this was, in some measure, to be accommodated to the time, and left to the wisdom and prudence of the chief rulers, both of the State and of the Church.’ Had the outward constitution of the Church been laid down in the New Testament in anything like definite outline, as a model for future ages, we should doubtless have found something like unanimity regarding it in the Church constitutions of after times; but even in the

writings of the Fathers and in the ecclesiastical polity of the first few centuries, we can find nothing like a uniform system derived from the apostolic practice. It has been said, that, supposing it was the Divine intention to give us a model of Church government in the New Testament, we need only expect it in the shape of occasional scattered hints, just as we find the doctrines and precepts of the Christian scheme; but the analogy of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai is against this supposition, for God, when it pleased Him to reveal a form of Church government to the sons of men, did so in a detailed and systematic form, while in the New Testament nothing like a complete system can be gathered from all the occasional hints that are scattered through it.

The examination of the Christian form of Church government, as given in the Acts and the Epistles, will lead impartial students, we think, to the following three conclusions:—

1. *That the example of the Apostles is not necessarily an invariable guide for future ages, in reference to the external administration of Christ's kingdom.* As an infallible guide in all the duties and relations of life, whom we may not only ever imitate with safety, but are bound to imitate where imitation is possible, there is only One set before us in Scripture, the Lord Jesus Christ, who 'hath left us an example, that we should follow His steps;' but even the greatest of His servants can propose his own example for imitation only as he follows the Divine model, 'Be ye followers (or imitators) of me, as I also am of Christ.' There were, no doubt, many cases in which the conduct of the Apostles was inspired equally with their writings, as when they were acting under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit, in which

case they were instruments in God's hands for carrying out His purposes. Had Peter been left to his own discernment, for instance, in baptizing the Gentile Cornelius and admitting the Gentiles into the Christian Church, it is probable he might have hesitated to accept the invitation, or we might have been left in doubt as to the propriety of his conduct; but, forewarned as he was of the great fact of the conversion of the Gentiles by the Saviour Himself, having it pointed out to him in a significant vision and by the direct voice of the Spirit, and seeing the spiritual results that flowed from the baptism of Cornelius' family, we know that he was carrying out the purposes of God. On the other hand, his temporizing with the Jews at Antioch<sup>1</sup> showed, that when not acting under the immediate inspiration of the Spirit, he was not above ordinary human weakness. But, even though we hold, as we are ready to do, that the conduct of the Apostles was in the main under the guidance of Divine inspiration in settling the affairs of the Christian Church, it by no means follows that everything they did is either imitable, or ought to be imitated, by all future ages. Their position and gifts were peculiar; the circumstances of the Church were also, as we shall by and by see, peculiar; and hence, the institutions which they adopted were also in many respects peculiar. For instance, their appeal to lot in the election of an additional Apostle when the infant Church was the subject of miraculous interposition, would now be unsuitable in the election of a Christian minister, and the same may be said in reference to other practices, which we have not leisure to discuss.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 11, 12.



Hence, from the fact that the Apostles adopted such and such institutions in the peculiar and extraordinary state of the Church, it does not necessarily follow that we are bound in after ages to follow exactly in their footsteps. For natural and positive law differs in this, that, while the former is unchanging and unchangeable, the latter is of no force until it is specially imposed, and is of force only as long as the peculiar circumstances of its imposition remain.

2. *That the Apostles did not enter on their work with any preconceived and minute plan of Church administration, but adapted themselves very much to circumstances as they arose.* Proofs of this meet us almost at every step in our search through the Acts and Epistles. With all their extraordinary illumination, and zeal for the extension of their Master's kingdom, we are unable to find that they had any theory of Church government beyond the parting commission they had received from their Master. The circumstances in which they began their work demanded far more attention to the propagation of the truth than to any permanent institutions that might embody it. Their position was very different from that of a number of Christian teachers, such as the Reformers in Scotland after the Reformation sitting down to deliberate on the best form of Church government for a society already Christianized. On the contrary, they had to make their way from small beginnings, and spread themselves over a number of kingdoms, and propagate the Gospel in almost entire isolation from one another. In these circumstances, we find that they were prepared to consider the peculiar circumstances of each Church which they founded, just as they arose, and in some cases, instead

of originating new institutions, they modified the old, and suited them, as they saw fit, to the circumstances of the Church. For instance, they do not seem to have suggested that community of goods which the first enthusiasm of the Jerusalem Christians led them to form, but they accepted the institution, and probably regulated the practice and sought to prevent its abuse. Again, the very first order of Church officers they appointed, arose, we may say, out of accidental circumstances, or from the necessity of their position. From the common Christian stock a distribution was daily made to the poor, the superintendence of which at first devolved on the Apostles, but as the labour increased from the increase of recipients, and complaints and jealousies arose as to the distribution, the Apostles proposed a special order of officers<sup>1</sup>, called *deacons*, to superintend the temporal affairs of the Church, while they gave themselves entirely to spiritual work. Thus, from a circumstance to all appearance accidental, and evidently without any preconceived plan in the minds of the Apostles, there arose a new order of ministers in the Church, who afterwards retained their place in the ecclesiastical constitution. But the mere fact of their being first suggested by the Apostles to meet a felt want in a particular Church, and that they were of a specified number, would not, we presume, be considered an invariable and necessary rule in every succeeding ecclesiastical constitution, where the circumstances may materially differ.

It may be supposed, although we have not the same certain information, that the order of presbyters or bishops arose much in the same way. When the

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi. 1-3.

labours of the Apostles increased and the number of the Churches was multiplied, it would be found impossible for them to give a personal superintendence to each, and therefore, as in the case of the deacons, the members of the Church would be directed to choose out one or more from among their number, best fitted by knowledge and piety to rule over them, and these would be solemnly ordained by the Apostles or their deputies to the work of the ministry and the superintendence of that particular Church. Thus, there would be continued a channel openly recognised and stamped with the apostolic sanction for the transmission of the truth and the government of the particular congregation or congregations in each Christian centre, in the persons of regularly ordained men who, from their age and Christian experience, would be called presbyters, and from their office of superintendence, bishops, the number of whom might vary according to the condition and size of the several congregations. But, owing to the rapid movements of St. Paul, and some of the other Apostles, in their work of evangelization, and from the circumstance that in those places where they left but a handful of converts, a congregation or Church might develop itself from these in their absence, it might be occasionally necessary to resort to extraordinary expedients, and select one or two deputies properly qualified, who in name and place of the Apostles might go from city to city and ordain elders where necessary, performing at the same time the work of evangelists. Such were Timothy and Titus<sup>1</sup>; and it is evident their mission arose from the circumstance that the Apostles were unable to undertake the whole work of

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 2, iv. 2-5; Titus i. 5, and ii.

visiting the Churches they had planted and ordaining elders in person.

We shall select but another instance in illustration of our proposition that the Apostles had no preconceived plan of operation in planting the Christian Church, but considered each case just as it occurred; viz. the first General Council of the Church at Jerusalem, regarding which much has been written and many diverse views have been entertained. This meeting arose, as we are informed in Acts xv, out of a difficulty about the imposition of the rite of circumcision on the Gentile Christians, which had been contended for by certain Judaizing teachers who came down from Jerusalem to Antioch, where Paul and Barnabas had been preaching. As this doctrine seemed to occasion considerable variety of opinion among the Antioch Christians, it was resolved, probably at St. Paul's suggestion, to send a deputation to consult the Apostles and Elders of the Church at Jerusalem. This was accordingly done; Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem, where they seem to have had several private interviews with the Apostles on the question; and then at a public meeting, composed of the Apostles and Elders, the question, after long deliberation, was determined, and in such a way that they were fully assured of having the mind of the Spirit; for when they sent in an epistle the result of their deliberations to the Churches in Syria and Cilicia, they were able to say, 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.' Now had Paul and Barnabas been possessed of absolute and infallible authority to determine all matters of dispute regarding the government and practices of the Church, according to some preconceived plan, they would doubt-

less have settled this dispute in their own name, but, instead of this, they allow themselves to be sent to Jerusalem to get the collective opinion of the Church there on the matters in dispute. Nor did even the Apostles here pronounce authoritatively on the matter, but took into their council the Elders of the Church, and arrived at their conclusion only after long and faithful deliberation on the part of the whole council; several of the Apostles even yielding somewhat of their own peculiar views, that a unanimous decision might be sent forth to the Gentile Church. Now this, we think, clearly shows that while no individual could here pronounce authoritatively on the internal or external polity of the Christian Church, the Holy Spirit acted in unison with their highest collective wisdom, overruling their combined deliberations for the union and peace of the infant Church.

3. *That the extraordinary circumstances of the founding of the Christian Church required several peculiar institutions which were unsuitable for after ages.* For one thing, its condition was peculiar, as being the subject of miraculous interpositions. The gifts of tongues, of prophecy, and of working miracles, required extraordinary institutions for their manifestation. Although Elders were generally appointed to every Church as soon as a congregation was formed, who had the superintendence of its affairs and were its regularly constituted teachers, yet advantage was taken of any peculiar gifts that were found within the Church, and accordingly we find evangelists, prophets, teachers, those who spoke with tongues, and those who interpreted, all exercising their several gifts for the edification of the Christian community. In certain cases, we find also the ordinary

rule in reference to the ordination by the Apostles or their deputies to the eldership dispensed with. Apollos commenced his public ministry with but a very imperfect knowledge of the Christian scheme; but, being taken and instructed by two private Christians in the way of God more perfectly, he was not only permitted to continue in the office of preaching, but was admitted into the fellowship of the Apostles, and became one of the chief pillars of the Christian Church. In fact, owing to the unsettled state of the early Church, and the want of regular teachers, advantage was taken of all the spiritual gifts which were found among the members, and each one was employed in the sphere in which he was most useful for edification. This was necessary in the infant condition of the Church, as also for taking advantage of those miraculous gifts which God had bestowed upon many of the members; and under the immediate superintendence of the Apostles, these gifts would be properly regulated, and their exercise would tend to edification: but it is evident that, under a more settled condition of the Church, such irregularities must cease, and a more regular and complete organization be established.

It well accords, then, both with the principles of the adaptation of the outward forms embodying the truth to the condition of mankind, and with the peculiar circumstances in which the Apostles and their immediate successors were placed, that they would adapt their Church organization to the various places and conditions of society in which their congregations were first set up—that while in one place they could adopt a pretty complete ecclesiastical machinery, in another they could introduce but the mere rudiments of Church

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polity. This is not only agreeable to reason, but it is corroborated by Epiphanius, a bishop of the fourth century, who tells us that the Apostles were not able to settle all things at once, but that in some places, according to circumstances, they appointed only a bishop and deacons; in others, presbyters and deacons; in others, bishops, presbyters, and deacons: and this accounts, according to him, for the variety which St. Paul uses in his Epistles in addressing the various Churches he had planted. It will be seen, without much reflection, that had the Apostles laid down one uniform system of Church government, from which it was not intended to deviate, it would have been impossible fully to apply it, not only in after ages, but even in their own. Where a nation was Christianized, and under a certain degree of civilization, it might have been possible, yea desirable, to impose upon it a complete and beautiful system of Church polity, with its power of self-government, its various gradations of officers, its clerical and lay organizations for internal improvement, its well-assorted plans for missionary work at home and abroad. But who does not see that the very system which might be productive of immense good in the settled condition of a Christian Church, would only be an incumbrance, a clumsy and almost impracticable contrivance, in a rudimentary condition of Christian society? In the latter case, just as in the case of the Church in apostolic times, there would be necessary the application of a variety of expedients, devised by the highest Christian wisdom, to meet the various circumstances as they arose. At first, the simple organization of a place of meeting, with the regular services of a minister of the Gospel;

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then the selection of his assistants, in the shape of lay elders and deacons, to manage the affairs of the congregation; then, a union with one or more similar congregations, under one Church government; and so on, very much in the same way as the first Christian Church was formed.

So that we think the history of the planting of the Christian Church by the Apostles makes it very clear that they entered on their mission with no predetermined, infallible plan of Church government, but suited themselves to the circumstances as they occurred; that the peculiarities of their situation led them to adopt some expedients of Church organization which were never meant to be imitated, and could not possibly be so in after times; but that the great work of their life was not the laying down the outlines of Church polity, but the fulfilment of their Master's parting command, to 'preach the Gospel to every creature.' It would have been easy for them to sketch out an unmistakeable plan of Church government, to be followed by all ages, whether by bishops, or presbyters, or by congregations acting independent of one another—as easy as to regulate the relations of Christians to the heathen world, or the keeping of feast-days, or anything else pertaining to the doctrine or discipline of the Church. But we find no such certain directions; and the very fact that Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, and other Protestant denominations, all find exclusive authority for their respective forms of Church government in the New Testament, seems clearly to indicate that no uniform system had been intended.

Whether, then, we contrast the Jewish and Christian



dispensations in respect of the purposes to be served by them, and their relations to society, and draw our inferences *a priori*, as to what we might expect to be the principles of Christian Church polity, or whether we study the history of the New Testament Church by itself, not only as founded by the Apostles, but as developed in after ages, we may equally conclude that there could be no minute and definite plan laid down by Christ and His Apostles for the outward organization of the Church, and that, while we follow the leading *principles* laid down in the New Testament for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, we should suit our ecclesiastical institutions to the age, country, and condition of society in which we may be placed, so that, by the Divine blessing, they may become the best means both for the preservation and extension of Christian truth throughout the world.

The acknowledgment of this principle we hold to be of the utmost importance for securing mutual ecclesiastical recognition, and, when needful, combined Christian action among all the evangelical Churches in this country, and therefore we have taken up more time in proving it than some at first may think necessary. 'The reason,' says Robert Hall, 'why Christians have been so tardy in arriving at a disposition (to union) so much to be desired, is principally to be found in those exaggerated notions of the importance of Church government under some particular form which so long swayed the minds of excellent men.' If the Episcopalian holds that his form of Church government, and his alone, has the Divine sanction; or the Presbyterian, that his, and no other, is formed

upon the New Testament model; or other denominations see in their own Church polity, not only the best that their own best men could devise, but the exclusive, Divinely-appointed organization for the dissemination of Christian truth,—then we know not how that toleration and charity can exist among the various religious denominations of our country which are necessary for mutual recognition and combined Christian action, and for working out the only idea of unity which is practically possible under the Christian dispensation, viz. mutual recognition as Catholic fellow-Churchmen, by the members of all orthodox evangelical Churches. But let it not be supposed that, although we have contended for a liberal application of the principles of New Testament Church polity, we hold the outward organization of any Christian Church to be of little importance; on the contrary, outward forms have an intimate connection with the moral nature of man, and the outward organization of a Church may have a very material influence on its usefulness and prosperity; and hence it behoves all Christian bodies to bring their Church polity as much within the spirit of the New Testament principles, and make it as fit a vehicle for preserving the purity of its doctrines and disseminating the truth, as possible. Indeed, we hold with Bunsen<sup>1</sup>, that ‘the forms, customs, and acts of divine worship, in their constant recurrence and general contact with all the members of the Church, together with the active influence of the constitution, as manifested in its acts of government and administration, have demonstratively transformed by degrees

<sup>1</sup> Church of the Future.

the most important doctrines.' At the same time, he well points out the danger of too exclusive attention to outward forms, when he says, 'These acts speak a language, not only more influential, but more authoritative than words. For the mind of man has a natural tendency to endeavour to introduce unity into customs and ordinances, and seeks and finds the standard of this unity in assuming these forms and ordinances to be facts, and, indeed, Divinely ordained, and therefore Divine facts.'

It will now, we think, become apparent on what grounds we are to seek for a visible Church unity—the realization of that idea which is the earnest aspiration of every child of God. A unity of Church government, or one universal ecclesiastical system, was, we may reasonably conjecture from the principles we have unfolded, never intended by the great Head of the Church; nor is it, in the present circumstances of the human race, possible, or even desirable. With so many differences of outward condition, of national peculiarities, of civil constitution, of opinions regarding the subordinate doctrines of Scripture, any such outward union, were it to exist, could be but a name and nothing more, could possess no inherent force in the propagation of Christian truth; and the history of Great Britain clearly shows that every attempt to enforce it has been attended with the most disastrous consequences. But, on the grounds we have propounded, while each religious denomination holds its own constitution to be the best for its members, and that it embraces the leading principles of Church polity promulgated by the Apostles, but claims for it no exclusive Divine model; while each does not reprobate

its neighbour, because, teaching the essentials of Divine truth, it embodies it under a different form; but while, as with the early Churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth, Christian communion exists amid diversity of outward form, and even of views, in reference to many Church observances,—there is here surely a possibility of mutual recognition, prayer, and counsel amongst the members of all evangelical Churches, and, where needful, combined action among the various Christian denominations, in all that pertains to the extension of Christ's kingdom, and the amelioration, physical and moral, of the human race. If such a spirit can be found to exist, we see no barrier to a common action in the study and application of the principles of Christian moral science. We know very well that there was in the apostolic Church considerable difference of opinion, and of practice also, concerning the observance of circumcision by the Gentile Christians, and of other rites of the ceremonial law—the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath, the regard to be paid to feast-days, the mode of keeping the Lord's Supper, and the like; but there existed Christian communion among them, nevertheless; and while the Apostle Paul acknowledges this outward diversity in things non-essential to salvation, he was ever ready to exhort the early Christians to toleration in regard to things indifferent, and to Christian unity in faith and every good work. 'We, then,' he says<sup>1</sup>, 'that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. . . . Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be *likeminded*

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xv. 1, 5, 6, 7.

*one towards another* according to Christ Jesus: that ye may *with one mind and one mouth glorify God*, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore *receive ye one another*, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.' This unity of heart and of Christian action for the glory of God, amid diversity of opinion and practice in things non-essential or indifferent, is what we contend for among Christians of different religious denominations at the present day. Overlooking the points wherein they differ in the consideration of the more important points wherein they agree, they may give birth to a development of united Christian action almost new to the present age, such as shall realize the description of the evangelical prophet of the glory of the latter days, 'when the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim: but they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand on Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.' May not Christians learn a lesson from the experiences of savage life? However little union there may be among the several families of a tribe in ordinary circumstances, and however ready to contend among themselves, yet let a common enemy appear, and all minor differences are forgotten, and shaking hands as brothers, and uniting themselves under a common leader, they rush on in united band against the coming foe. So, when the enemy is at our door; when, in the shape of godlessness and misery, and crime and insidious disease, he lurks in the over-crowded homes of every large town, or, under the guise of a false

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liberalism, disseminates the poison of error over the land, with all the facilities which printing, advertising, and carriage give him, why should not Christians and Christian Churches take their stand on some common ground, and, forgetting all their differences about things non-essential, and uniting all their forces, bear down in heavy phalanx against the common foe?

## CHAPTER IV.

### ON THE DOCTRINAL BASIS OF CHRISTIAN CHURCH UNION.

WHAT a pity it is, must be the reflection of every earnest mind, that the Christian world should be so violently agitated, and true Christians of different evangelical denominations kept so far apart, by disputes about matters which even the most zealous allow are not essential to salvation! Volumes have been written, precious time has been wasted, passions have been excited, about doctrines and usages the most trivial, when compared with the essential truths of our common faith necessary to make a man a true Christian. There has, perhaps, been more fighting about what form of Church government and what outward mode of worship are the most Scriptural, than about all the vital doctrines of religion, and certainly there have been bitterer passions excited in the discussion of the one than of the other. When a patriotic army has been drawn up against the approaching foe, who does not lament those unseemly disputes that have sometimes taken place as to precedence—disputes as to who shall occupy the right wing, or who the left, and what commander shall lead this division, or who shall lead

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that, while in the meantime the enemy is fast advancing to find them dispirited and unprepared. The commanders and men may be both brave and loyal, but what of that, when their mutual jealousies and unseemly disputes prevented them from uniting against the coming foe? Similar to this have been the divisions and jealousies among professing Christians; and while they have been disputing which was the most Scriptural form of Church government, and which the best form of worship, the enemy has been gathering and strengthening at their doors, so that they can only attack him in broken, disunited ranks. It is, then, a matter of no little importance to seek for a basis of visible Church unity, which we have failed to find in any outward ecclesiastical organization such as exists among the various religious denominations at the present day. We have seen pretty clearly that the principles of the New Testament Church admit of no such outward unity, that is, of all Christians being subject to the same ecclesiastical polity. We have established, we trust, the position that no one Christian denomination can claim the exclusive sanction of Divine authority for its Church government, so as to have a right to subject all others to it; that, while all contain more or less of the system followed generally by the Apostles, none contain it all, while every one, without exception, has something more. In addition to this, it was pointed out that the system of the Apostles was by no means uniform, and that it contained a principle of expansiveness which allowed it to be adapted to the ever-varying outward circumstances in which the Gospel should be promulgated and the Church of Christ established to the end of time.



Where, then, are we to seek for a common basis of Christian fellowship and action among the evangelical denominations of this country? If we consider what the combined Christian force of this country might effect, either in home or foreign work, and how great would be the indirect effect of the union of all true Christians for one common work, and also how great a hindrance there has been in the application of Christian principles for the amelioration of pressing social evils through the isolation of Christian sects, the inquiry will appear a momentous one. In fact, there can be few speculations in the present age either more interesting or more important.

In proceeding with our investigation, we may lay down the proposition, that if there is to be combined action among professing Christians of all evangelical denominations for a common good, it must proceed from some principle understood and acknowledged by all. In the case of any other similar Association, such as the Social Science Association, the union among the members must be effected on certain principles admitted and acted on by all. Without some beliefs in common, there could be no combined action by the members of the Association; in fact, no possibility of creating a membership at all. There must be an assent to the ordinary scientific principles, a certain knowledge of the progress of science and a belief in its application to the well-being of society. Much more is it necessary in an Association for the Promotion of Christian Moral Science, that there should be a certain groundwork of belief and certain principles held in common. We do not conceive that it would be sufficient, as a common principle of union, that all the

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members simply designated themselves by the 'Christian Moral Science Association,' for, independent of other reasons, the word *Christian* is used in such a lax sense at the present day, that its unqualified use would here lead to doubt and confusion. We know that there are some Deists, who, while maintaining in private their peculiar doctrines, still keep up in public some sort of Christian profession, but it is not intended to admit them members of this Association. There is also the body of Socinians or Unitarians, who, while robbing the Lord Jesus of the essential glory of His Godhead, and regarding Him as a mere man, still call themselves by His name. And there are others who have so obscured the glory of Bible Christianity by their traditions and unscriptural rites, and have so elevated a creature to the glory of the Creator, that the very name of Protestantism stands out as a protest against their unscriptural dogmas. These also, though calling themselves by the name of Christian, could not be the constituent members of a Protestant and Christian society. Moreover, without any expressed belief on the part of the Association, as a basis of united Christian action, it would not be possible for the world outside to understand their principles or appreciate their conduct. The very vagueness of their professed principles might give occasion for suspicion being cast upon their motives, and opposition being offered to their action. It might be insinuated that the Association was one-sided, or narrow, or a specious means of propagating error; and there would be no doctrinal standard to appeal to in refutation of the calumnies. It might be said, and said truly, that it has no means of excluding the enemies of the faith, who were willing

to assume the wide-meaning name of Christian—that, in fact, there was no guarantee of its containing real Christians at all. True, the names of the evangelical denominations, of whom it was composed, might be so far a guarantee against the admission of men who were openly heterodox; but then, what means would the world have of knowing whether these men of different religious denominations brought their sectarian differences into the Association, or whether they were to leave them behind? We therefore consider it absolutely necessary for this Congress to hold a common basis of belief, well known to the world, but entirely undenominational in its origin. This is not to be an Association of Episcopalians, Baptists, Presbyterians, &c., the very name of whom in connection with it would excite undue prejudice, but an Association of Christians for Christian objects, holding the vital doctrines of Christianity in common, overlooking all their points of difference, and associating themselves in regard to those points in which they are agreed.

The Bible, then, it will be supposed, as the fountain-head of all Christian belief, must form the common doctrinal basis of such an Association. This is true, in so far as that all who are to become members of it, must acknowledge the Scriptures as the pure and entire word of God, and all-sufficient as a rule of faith. But it is well known that even among those who acknowledge its Divine origin and inspiration, there is a vast variety of opinion, not only in regard to the essential doctrines of revelation, but as to a large number of greater or less importance; for all religious sects that go by the name of Christian, claim alike to ground their systems more or less on the doctrines of Scripture.

Here we shall find the Socinian and the Papist meeting on common ground with the Evangelical Christian—the one bringing Scripture to the bar of his own reason, the other regarding Scripture as a sufficient authority as far as it goes, but not receiving it as the sole rule of faith. Nevertheless, as the basis of all Christian truth, as the pure and inspired Word of God, and the sole rule of faith, the Scriptures must be acknowledged by all the members of a Christian Moral Science Association.

There is also a narrower basis, which along with this might, under certain circumstances, have been adopted as a very convenient and suitable doctrinal standard for this Association; viz. *a common belief in, and adoption of, the two positive rites of the New Testament Church, as symbolical of the great and saving doctrines of the Holy Scriptures: we mean Baptism and the Lord's Supper.* For he who adopts the sacrament of Baptism as a Christian symbol, acknowledges his belief in the three Persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in which name the rite is to be performed, as also in the natural sinfulness of the human heart and the cleansing efficacy of the Holy Spirit, which the washing with water symbolizes. And he who partakes of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper acknowledges his belief in the Lord Jesus as the Saviour of sinners; in His broken body and shed blood, or perfect atonement, as the means of salvation; in faith, as the appropriating organ of the blessings of the new covenant, and in the union and communion of true Christians with Christ and with one another. We have thus in these two ordinances represented to us the chief doctrines of the Christian faith, and hence a common

acknowledgment and adoption of them would imply a common belief in the doctrines they represent, independent of the mode or time of their celebration. But the adoption of these two New Testament ordinances as the doctrinal basis of Christian unity, though apparently a simple and practical expedient, is attended with at least two serious objections. First, that among Protestant evangelical Churches there is a considerable variety of opinion as to the nature of these ordinances and the doctrines symbolized by them, and therefore they might signify to one body of Christians a different thing from what they signify to another, so that they could scarcely form a common standard of belief to all who are proposed to be embraced in this Christian congress. And, secondly, if adopted, they might have the effect of excluding a religious body who have ever stood in the first rank of Christian philanthropists, we mean the Society of Friends, whose views of the nature and obligations of the sacraments differ from those of other Christian denominations.

Nor shall we be much nearer our purpose, if we select any of the creeds of modern evangelical Churches in Great Britain as a common basis of Christian union. Not, however, that we have any sympathy with some of the unthinking or loose thinkers of the present age in their indiscriminate condemnation of creeds. For creeds or religious professions are of vast importance to the Christian Church, as marking out those doctrines of the Word of God on which all Christians, of the same denomination at least, are agreed, so that with these fully ascertained, they can proceed without distraction to the investigation of others which have

not been so fully or distinctly revealed. It would be as great a hindrance for Churches to be ever going back to the proof of first principles, as it would be for the astronomer to take up his time in investigating and proving the well-ascertained laws of astronomy, instead of starting to make further discoveries from those principles which have been already proved. And thus, as indicating the progress made in the field of theology, or the doctrines of the Scripture system already well ascertained, creeds are of great value, while they serve at the same time as a basis of union for all Christians of the same denomination, and a mark of their religious belief to the world. It is sometimes objected to them that they lay a restriction on free inquiry, by binding down the conscience of the inquirer within certain narrow limits, from which it is unlawful to diverge, and that, as a religious test, they have no power over a man who submits to them, without any intention of strictly binding himself by them. But, in regard to the first objection, it may be affirmed that when properly considered, instead of limiting the progress of the human mind in the investigation of religious truth, they give it a well-ascertained basis to start from, so that it can pursue its investigations with greater advantage, and make greater advances than if it had to take up time in proving principles already well ascertained; and in regard to the second, although they cannot, as a religious test, keep men from error, yet they often preserve them from rash speculations, and from a standard of appeal by which those who diverge from their professed belief may be judged. They thus tie down the Church to a definite system of doctrine, and keep it from the influence of daring.

speculations. They are necessary, in some shape or other, for the very existence of all associated religious bodies. Without them, any common religious belief in a Christian denomination would be impossible, and error would spring up on every side, with no power to check it. On the other hand, they are very liable to abuse. They lead men often to believe that their particular creed contains the whole sum of religious knowledge, and that all its dogmas are alike necessary and important, that in fact it contains a complete and perfect summary of all the great truths God has made known in His Word, and even of all that is knowable by man of the relations of the creature to the Creator. It is often forgotten, that many at least of the minor doctrines in our creeds—those especially that are drawn but from one or two texts of Scripture—may be false, while those texts relatively to the whole system of truth revealed and unrevealed are absolutely true. In fact, several of the doctrines contained in our creeds are but theories gathered from a very narrow induction, which may be true within our limited experience, but which may be only partially so when viewed in relation to the whole system of truth. It would have been better for the progress of Christianity had they contained only those great doctrines which are well ascertained and abundantly proved in Scripture, instead of binding men, as many of them do, to the acknowledgment of probable truths. For, when too extended, and embracing many doctrines not essential to salvation, they have often acted as a means of isolating Christian bodies from each other who held to the same essential truths, by giving an importance to minor points equal to the most essential, and thus setting up a sort of

artificial barrier against the union of the evangelical Churches in the country.

However necessary creeds may be, then, to give definiteness to the teaching and provide against the introduction of error in any religious body, it will be seen at once that no creed of any of the evangelical Churches in Britain is so comprehensive, and so free from non-essential doctrines, as to be accepted by the others as a basis of visible Church union. For, while all contain more or less of the great doctrines of Scripture, there is not one of them but contains much more than is essential to salvation, and it is precisely about these minor doctrines that the various Churches differ. While one regards infant baptism and baptism by sprinkling as Scriptural and proper, another rejects both and upholds the baptism of adults by immersion. Yet who will say that either one or the other is absolutely essential to salvation? While one holds it the duty of the civil magistrate 'to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed;' another denies the right of the civil magistrate to interfere in any way; but is there any one who will maintain that either the one view or the other is essential to salvation? While one holds as sanctioned and authorized by Scripture the three orders of clergy, others see in it authority for only one or two; while one holds as a matter of faith the lawfulness of an oath in a court of justice, another denies it; but who would stake his salvation on any such subordinate matter of



Christian practice? Now, from the very fact that so many of these non-essential, yet doubtless very important, doctrines being bound up in our creeds with those which are essential to salvation, we should find it impossible for all the Christian Churches to accept the creed of any one of them as a basis of union, so as to unite them all under one external organization. We must therefore look beyond any modern Church creed for the basis of that Christian unity in behalf of which we are earnestly contending: ascend, indeed, much nearer the fountain-head of Christianity, to a time when there was not yet any division of the Christian Church into various sects, all holding the same fundamental truths; when the whole Church acknowledged and subscribed to one system of revealed truth. It is possible we may find here such a digest of Christian doctrine, such a creed containing the vital truths of Christianity and nothing more, as all the Churches which are to compose this Christian congress shall be willing to subscribe to. If such a religious confession, embodying the saving doctrines of the Christian faith, and these only, can be found, to which all the members could adhere, then their common belief would be known to the world, and would stand out as a witness to their soundness in the faith, while all minor differences in reference to Church government, the administration of ordinances, and the like, would be merged in one great Christian purpose.

There are presented to us three early creeds, composed before the end of the fourth century, when as yet there were not outward divisions in the orthodox Church—dissent being indicated only by the views of certain heretics, such as Arius and the Gnostics, on

essential doctrines, which excluded them altogether from the pale of the visible Church. The first of these is what is called the Apostles' Creed, now known not to have been composed, at least wholly, by the Apostles, but to have assumed its present form by degrees, and not to have been completed till towards the end of the second century. It is very definite and simple; the great objection to it for our purpose being that it is too concise, and not sufficiently clear on the point of Christ's eternal Sonship and equality with the Father; for, while all the religious bodies of whom this Association is composed might subscribe to it, others might do the same whose teaching is at variance with Scripture on essential points. It might answer very well so far as it goes, but there would be need of something more explicit regarding some of the vital doctrines of Scripture. The next is the Nicæan Creed, composed by the first Œcumenical Council, held at Nice A.D. 325, and directed chiefly against the errors of Arius. This creed, while very full in regard to the Divine nature of the Redeemer, is, like the last, wanting in explicitness regarding the nature of the Holy Ghost, as hitherto there had been no great heresy broached on that subject. More suitable in all respects for our purpose will be the Constantinopolitan Creed, called sometimes erroneously the Nicæan, composed by the second General Council, held at Constantinople A.D. 381, and directed chiefly against the errors of Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople, a semi-Arian, who regarded the Holy Spirit merely as a Divine agency, and not a person like the Father and Son. This creed, while affirming, almost in the same words with the Nicæan, the Scripture doctrine regarding the Father

and Son, is also very explicit regarding the person and agency of the Holy Spirit; and as it would form the best doctrinal basis we know of any authority, for a union of all evangelical Churches, without interfering with their peculiar views on minor details, we here give it at length.

#### CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED.

‘I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made: Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come.’

If to this were added the Augustinian doctrine of free grace, and the Lutheran, of faith as the means of appropriating the justifying righteousness of Christ, both of which stand out as historical landmarks in the development of Christianity, we can conceive nothing

better suited to embody the views of orthodox Christians in reference to the essential doctrines of the Christian scheme.

To have, then, common articles of belief to which all could subscribe, while all other differences are merged for the purpose of Christian union, is surely a great point gained in the institution of this Association. Unlike other creeds, which often serve the purpose of separating religious denominations, this would help to unite them. All debateable points are here left out of view: a distinct system of belief in the essential articles of religion is enunciated, so that all who have a mind to become members of this Association know at once what they are about, and the outside world cannot reproach them as being a society without principles, or a union of religious denominations without any proper basis of union.

As there is no possibility of a complete union, in the meantime at least, of all the Christian denominations under one system of Church discipline and government, and as the very fact of perfect freedom of thought necessitates a variety of opinion and outward differences among religious men, we see no reason why each Church should not maintain, as before, its distinctive creed, while all earnest men of each denomination, on becoming members of a Christian Moral Science Association, may subscribe also to a narrower creed, embodying doctrines acknowledged by all. If this were done, we should find a great benefit accruing from this intimate union of Christians in every Church, in the smoothing down of difficulties, in the greater attention paid to matters of common interest, and in the cementing of a brotherly and charitable feeling among all who

have common Christian duties to perform, and common enemies to contend with. We should no longer witness the mournful spectacle of the enemies of Christianity pointing the finger of reproach at the divisions and dissensions among professing Christians, or of different denominations, who agree in all the essential points of religion, and differ only in outward organization, anathematizing one another, as if each regarded his neighbour as an apostate from the faith. And thus, though the Association were to be productive of no direct benefit in the alleviation of the moral evils that afflict society, it would have a blessed and abiding effect as a standing monument of the true brotherhood of all earnest Christian men, who, with beliefs and aspirations and sympathies in common, are yet kept from acting in union by artificial ecclesiastical barriers, which they cannot break down.

## CHAPTER V.

### VISIBLE CHURCH UNITY IN ACTION.

It has been, we think, pretty clearly proved that no Church creed of the present age could be subscribed by Christians of all denominations, so as to form a doctrinal basis of Christian union; and that any attempts towards enforcing unity of belief on anything save the essential doctrines of Christianity would be a sure means of disorganization. We have therefore set down a double doctrinal basis as that which may afford a starting-point for a Christian Moral Science Association: (1) An adherence to the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, and the sole rule of faith; (2) The adoption of the creed of the Council of Constantinople, in which the great doctrines regarding the three Persons in the Godhead are clearly and exactly stated, together with the two doctrines of free grace and justification by faith, which evangelical Christians universally acknowledge: and to this summary of religious belief, as removed from the region of present differences, we think there could be no difficulty in getting all the members of this proposed Association to subscribe.

The only other basis of union, or principle of visible

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Church unity necessary, is that which is implied in the very idea of such an Association, viz. *unity of Christian action*. All the members must be actuated by one spirit, must work in harmony, and for one common end. Each one must gird himself in his Christian armour to 'come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.' It is from this oneness of spirit and of action that the Association is to take its rise and have its proper sphere of usefulness. It would be of little avail to have any beliefs in common, if there were not at the same time a determination on the part of all the members to work together for the removal of the countless moral evils that afflict society; and therefore we conceive that the best way of showing wherein this practical union consists, is to point out some of the principal spheres of action in which it is to manifest itself, which will at the same time help to indicate some of the benefits that may be expected to flow from this Christian Moral Science Association. The field of its operations is indeed large and diversified, but not the less distinctly marked out. The work of this Association will not interfere with that of other scientific Associations already established, which by exciting a spirit of inquiry, and bringing the knowledge and experience of the ablest minds to bear on the social and economical problems of the age, have, each in its own sphere, already done much good. This Association has for its object 'to bring the elixir of the intellect and piety of the evangelical Churches to work out the problem, intellectual and practical, of giving scientific shape and highest potency to Christian morals;' and hence the moral and spiritual elevation of society in the application to it of the principles of a

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pure and a living Christianity. For this purpose, it would direct itself to the collecting and scientific arrangement of religious facts, the investigation of spiritual influences, and the application of Christian and philanthropic agencies to the removal of the greatest social and moral evils of the age. It would bring the best and ablest minds among its members to the elucidation of Divine truth; it would direct a searching investigation to be made into the causes and cure of the most prevalent forms of evil, and could apply the weight of its united influence in working out a remedy. Where some crying moral abuse was found spreading its roots deep and wide, demoralizing its victims and destroying their happiness for time and eternity, it would enlist the sympathies and employ the energies of its practical philanthropists, aiding and encouraging them in their self-denying work. These grand objects of social amelioration which have been hitherto taken up by individual philanthropists, often working separately without help or sympathy, and consequently at a great disadvantage, would be undertaken with greater hopes of success under the auspices of such an Association of Christian men, who could influence public opinion, devise together the best means of operation, and afford, where needful, material help. In such a work, for instance, as the elevation of the lapsed masses in many of our large towns, to which we shall have by and by occasion to refer more at length, we should not have, as hitherto, the action of individual Churches, isolated from each other and more or less imperfectly equipped, struggling, almost hopelessly, against the seething mass of crime, and want, and irreligion, but the combined force of this



great Christian Association brought to bear upon it, with such a well-understood knowledge of the principles of action and such subdivision of labour, as might afford some distant hope of rooting out the evil. There seem to us to be two principal spheres of work specially adapted for this Association, in the proper carrying out of which it may become a wide and lasting blessing to the nation.

1. The study of Christian moral science and of its relation to man's highest good, and the combating of what is pernicious in the intellectual and moral forces of the age.

2. The work of practical philanthropy, or the direct application of the principles of Christian moral science for the removal of the deep-seated moral and spiritual abuses of the age.

1. We find a most important sphere for united action on the part of this Association *in the study of Christian moral science and its relation to man's highest good, and in the combating of what is pernicious in the intellectual and moral forces of the age.* It might most profitably direct its attention in the first place to the evils which are disseminated by the agency of the Press. The great extension of knowledge in the present day, and the facilities afforded for the dissemination of literature among all classes, while fraught with innumerable blessings, has also its attendant evils. Formerly it was only the best educated, the wealthiest, and most intelligent that had access to books, in the reading of which they were capable of forming an independent judgment, and of resisting for the most part the temptation to yield themselves to the sway of corrupt or heretical influences. But in the present age

there has been a perfect revolution in the domain and influence of literature. Through the cheapness of paper and printing, and the various agencies employed to disseminate it, literature of all sorts, but especially what is pernicious, now reaches down to a class of minds over which in former times it had very little sway, many of its readers being not only unable to form an independent judgment, but particularly liable to be swayed by corrupting influences. Let it be considered that by means of this all-pervading literature there is a direct contact of mind with mind—of the mind and heart of the author with those of his readers, and thus he who personally would have but a limited influence for good or evil, has by means of his writings his influence multiplied a thousandfold. And not only so, but this influence brought to bear upon others by means of printed books is often more powerful and permanent even than a personal one, for it steals into the heart silently, but surely, when the reader is not liable to be swayed with prejudice, but has all his faculties at command. This being so, it might easily be conjectured, apart from actual experience, what must be the power for evil of that vast mass of cheap and pernicious literature constantly issuing from the Press, over minds unaccustomed to weigh evidence, and hearts easily inflamed by the contact with evil. Every one now, even the very poorest, is able to command something to his taste. If that is depraved, he will find publications that will pander to his lowest passions; if revolutionary, he will find within his reach enough to excite in him a spirit of restlessness and insubordination to established institutions; if sceptical, he will find books and periodicals filled with the most specious

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and flimsy arguments against Christianity, and sneers at all that is most sacred: and thus the intoxication of noxious literature is slaying perhaps as many victims as the pernicious influences of the dram-shop. The evil that is thus done by a depraved literature finding its way to thousands of the homes of the poor is incalculable. In fact, it has been proved that no fewer than ten thousand copies of pernicious papers are in circulation in one of our large towns alone; and if we reflect that each of these is read on an average by perhaps three or four individuals, we shall be able to understand the immense influence for evil of so many immoral and degrading publications, all the more dangerous that it makes its way secretly and silently. The subtle influence of depraved thought insinuates itself into the mind and heart, steeping every faculty of the soul in secret vice and ungodliness. Infidel views are widely promulgated, appealing with wonderful success to the vanity of ignorant and superficial minds; revolutionary opinions are sown broadcast, stirring up the workman against his master, the subject against his sovereign, and filling the minds of the lower orders with discontent; vile stories of depraved life, full of guilty intrigue and immoral sentiments, are everywhere read with avidity, till the passions are inflamed and every refined and noble feeling is driven out of the heart, and the more the spirit is brutalized the greater is the craving after new excitement: This is a phase of immoral influence almost newly developed in the present age, but it is one which, though less noticeable than such a vice as drunkenness, is equally with it slaying its thousands, degrading their souls, intensifying the power of other temptations, and preparing its victims for eternal

misery. In opposition to this multiplication of pernicious publications there are doubtless many others of an opposite character, healthy in their tendency, interesting in their matter, and so cheap as to be within the reach of most. But what chance has the contest of good with evil on equal terms? If both are left to find their way among the lapsed and uneducated masses by their own proper influence, and according to the ordinary relation of demand and supply, that which is most congenial to the depraved and sensual heart will be sure to prevail.

Now, in relation to this widely disseminated influence of a pernicious literature, we conceive there is a grand sphere of usefulness opened up for a Christian Moral Science Association ready to engage itself in whatever is destined for the moral and spiritual improvement of mankind. These evil influences must be met by counteracting influences for good, and wherever the poison of immorality has penetrated, thither the antidote must come. Hence there are two ways within the power of this Association of grappling with this gigantic evil. First, by the publication at a very cheap rate of such books and periodicals as are of a healthy, elevating, and Christian character, and withal full of interest and intelligible to the meanest capacity. A grand experiment has lately been made by some of our chief publishing firms, of republishing at a very cheap rate some of the most interesting classics of a former age, which can now be had for a sixpence or a shilling, and are very extensively read; but, at the same time, there is not always a wise discrimination exercised in the selection of what is most elevated and Christian in tone, to the exclusion of what is of a less healthy

tendency. But, as there are as beautiful, simple, and interesting Christian classics still little known among the great mass of our countrymen, it would come within the sphere of the society's operations to edit and republish, at the cheapest possible rate, either the books themselves or such selections from them as might be judged most interesting and suitable. Secondly, they might next institute an agency which, as their membership increased, might in course of time permeate every district of the country, for the dissemination of these Christian publications and others of a refining character, by which the best books and periodicals might be brought into contact with the very lowest classes of society, so that by the gradual creation of a taste for what is elevating and pure, the evils of a pernicious and degrading literature might in due time be counteracted. We are aware that certain Churches and societies have already had such agencies in operation to a limited extent, and, where rightly conducted, they have been the means of effecting much good; but under one large Christian Association, made up of members from every evangelical Church and from every part of the country, we might have an agency far more extensive in its operations, and capable of doing immeasurably more good. And though no doubt attended with considerable expense at first, it might in due time become self-supporting—the demand for excellent books increasing with the gradual creation of a more healthy taste among the masses. At the same time, where practicable, this Association might act in unison with other societies already in the field, or even effect a union with them.

But there is a higher sphere in which a pernicious

and subtle literature is doing its work. Among many of the educated and thoughtful there is a vast variety of loose and heretical religious views prevalent in the present age. There are certain revolutionary eras in the history of the world, of which the present seems to be one, when old thoughts and long-established ideas seem to lose their hold on men's minds, when it is accounted a mark of talent and superiority to broach what is startling and novel, while whatever is venerable through old age, both in reference to forms of thought and systems of religion, is looked upon with suspicion. This sifting process, if we may so call it, this unsettled state of men's minds, often gives birth to wild theories; glaring lurid lights rise ever and anon above the seething mass of speculation, fitted to dazzle, but also to mislead. Hence, to meet this craze for novelty, and partly indeed as the cause of its excitement, we find a vast number of philosophical and religious speculations afloat, which by their very wildness attract a wide and interested attention. Loose views of religious truth are put forward; sweeping generalizations are indulged in; reason is exalted to be the sole judge of truth, and thus there is fostered a spirit of daring and pride in the investigations into religious doctrine. Under the general name of *Rationalism* we find a very widespread and diversified system of error, assuming different appearances, but all resulting from the exaltation of reason over conscience, and the making it the sole judge of religious truth. One of its forms is the religion of *Pantheism*, which prevails, however, but to a very limited extent in this country. The disciples of this doctrine hold that all the phenomena of the universe, whether physical, intellectual, or moral, are but

manifestations or modifications of God, from which the logical deduction is, that there can be no moral responsibility; all evil as well as good being the necessary manifestation or self-development of the Godhead. The form in which this doctrine chiefly prevails among us is, either hero-worship, that is, the adulation of great men, or sometimes of mankind as a whole, being the highest self-conscious form in which the Deity develops Himself. There is widely prevalent also, in some form or other, the doctrine of *Materialism*, which classes as one two very different kinds of phenomena, between which it fails to recognise the distinction, holding life, intelligence, conscience to be but different modifications or properties of matter which is cognizable by the senses. From this it follows, according to the principles of Materialism, that the care of the body is the only religion, that there can either be no future state, or if there be, that man has little concern with it, or at least has no duty of providing for his happiness in it. Though not in its grossest forms, yet in its essential principles, we have this doctrine taught by many of the votaries of physical science in the present day. Accustomed in their researches among the works of nature to behold everywhere the reign of law, they frequently come to look upon the laws of nature as causative agents, capable of producing the effects they only testify to, and not as simply the mode in which an intelligent agent acts. Hence we have the various forms, the development theory, or the creation by law and development without the agency of a Supreme Being; the resolution of conscience and intelligence into the result of certain properties of matter; the denial of whatever is supernatural in religion, and, not unfre-

quently, the exclusion of a Great First Cause in the creation and government of the world. This doctrine, which appears in different forms more or less heretical, has a strange fascination for some minds, as tending to bring all the phenomena of the universe within the cognition of their senses, to the entire exclusion of consciousness and faith in the supernatural and unseen. These unscriptural doctrines, to which may be added *Spiritualism*, which makes man's spiritual intuitions the sole organs of knowing religious truth, all prevail to a greater or less extent in the present age, and may be comprehended under the general name of *Rationalism*; but, though highly dangerous and fascinating to certain minds, have not so wide an influence as *Rationalism proper*, or the exercise of reason as the sole organ of investigating Scripture truth. Assuming the sole right of reason to sit in judgment on a Divine revelation, and starting from certain *a priori* principles, it brings all Scripture truth to the test of these, cutting and carving as suits its taste, rejecting this, explaining away that, so that under its baneful influence many of the leading doctrines of Scripture have been ignored, and we have almost as many systems of religious truth as there are minds employed in investigation and directed by its principles. Under this withering, blighting system of religious investigation, all in Scripture that is abhorrent to the feelings of the natural man, or that tends to humble the pride of reason, is rejected or explained away. The Scripture system, and even the books of Scripture themselves, are destroyed inch by inch; and while the pride of the disciples of Rationalism is pampered, their hearts are fed on empty husks, or on partial truths which injure or destroy religion in the soul. Of this class of



Rationalists there are some that handle the Holy Scriptures with the greatest callousness, and others with apparent reverence; but what matters it whether your enemy approaches you with harsh voice and unfeeling heart, or with apparent reverence and affection, when he snatches away the only food on which your soul can live? Connected with this system of rationalistic interpretation, there is a great tendency in the present age to hasty generalization of Scripture truth, so that partial views of its doctrines are presented to the reader, striking from their novelty, but specially dangerous from their admixture of truth and error. We might instance, as illustrations of this statement, such books as 'Ecce Homo' and the 'Essays and Reviews,' both of which are written with great talent and originality, and attracted for a time a considerable degree of attention among thinking men. But vigorous and original as they are in thought and terse in style, they will not bear the test of a searching comparison with the Scripture system, and the conclusion strongly forced upon the careful reader well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures is, that much that is new in them is neither Scriptural nor true.

We have briefly referred to these systems of error, all more or less prevalent in the present age, in order to indicate another most important field of usefulness for a Christian Moral Science Association. There are comparatively few in the present day who have the leisure or the ability to examine opposing religious systems for themselves. Indeed, the great number of helps to thinking afforded by the vast multiplication of books on all subjects, naturally unfits men's minds for the effort of original thought and the thorough examination of

religious systems; and hence many are tempted to take up what is most specious and novel and adopt it as their own. Thus it is that many of these rational doctrines, very specious from their novelty, but containing partial views of truth, are received with a confidence that is altogether astonishing, with the effect of inducing a restlessness of mind in regard to the saving doctrines of religion; and thus that mighty wave of infidelity which had its origin in Germany has now begun to sweep over the British Islands, carrying not a few able and original thinkers in its course. But however much the influence of this prevailing Rationalism is to be regretted, it is yet not without its use in reference to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. It is exposing all old forms of belief to a severe sifting process, and wherever anything has been received, not because it was founded upon the eternal principles of God's Word, but because it has been handed down from generation to generation, that it has swept away, so that we are ever coming more and more to the reception of eternal and unchangeable truth into our religious systems without any human admixture. There is not a little of what is merely human in our systems, venerated because of its antiquity or from the influence of great names with which it was originally associated, which has been made to crumble away under the attacks of various enemies of the truth, so that in this age, and very much through this means, we are building more surely of the 'gold and silver and precious stones' upon the only foundation of Jesus Christ, to the exclusion of the 'wood, hay, and stubble,' than perhaps any preceding age has done since the time of the Apostles.

Now the aim of this Association would be, in the

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first place, to investigate the facts regarding the extent and influence of such false and pernicious religious systems as we have just referred to, and bring them to light, that the unwary might be put upon their guard, and having ascertained these, then to oppose mind to mind and theory to theory in combating them. Truth, if rightly presented, is perfectly able to hold its own in the contest with error, and hence the aim of the Association would be to enlist in its service the Christian minds best fitted to grapple with the evil, and bring thereby equal mental, but thoroughly Christian force to the discussion of these erroneous systems. Its aim would be, not to quench free inquiry, but to stimulate it—not to attempt to smother heresy, but to drag it before the clear light of Divine truth, that its deformity might appear. Like the admirable Bridgewater Treatises, which have done so much to establish the great principles of natural religion, and to meet the prevailing sceptical arguments of the age in which they were written, a series of treatises might be published under the auspices of the Association to meet and counteract the prevailing systems of error of the present day, in the compiling of which the best minds of the Association could be employed, and everyone receive that branch of the subject which he was best fitted to handle. Here there would be abundant scope for every kind of Christian learning and consecrated talent in the contest with doctrinal error in its every form, while the very fact of such an open challenge being given to the teachers of false religion, and the express determination to meet their principles at every point, would attract general attention to the inquiry, and might have even a very powerful indirect influence for good.

2. Looking at this Association from the standpoint of Catholic Church unity, we may discern another most important and very varied sphere of united operations in the field of *practical philanthropy*.

We need not suppose that all the members of this Association will be capable of grappling with those false systems of thought we have indicated, and would find their proper sphere of usefulness in counteracting the poison of doctrinal error. We need not suppose them all to be members of the learned professions, but whatever their profession or rank in life, we would expect each to bring to the work of the Association a talent of some kind: some, learning; others, worldly means; others, the gift of sympathy with suffering in every form; and all, a spirit of Christian love and a readiness to be employed in whatever good work they may be best fitted for. Great as are the evils of intellectual and moral error, of the dissemination of immoral or heretical views among all classes of the people, there is one perhaps of still greater magnitude, and demanding every earnest and immediate effort on the part of the Christian public to remedy it. This is the degraded condition of the lapsed masses in all our large towns, and also of the victims of intemperance and other destructive vices wherever they are to be met with. The condition physical and spiritual, particularly, of the vast multitudes of the lapsed in every large town, and the application of the principles of Christian moral science for their elevation, must immediately occupy the attention of this Association if it is to be a permanent influence for good; and there are few spheres where all true Christians could better occupy themselves, without any of their sectarian influences

coming into play, than this. When we reflect for a moment that in every large town there are, according to the most trustworthy calculations, one third of the grown-up inhabitants that are members of no Church, and many of them destitute of any form of religion—that there are large numbers of the children of these whose only learning is an education in crime—that thousands and thousands are huddled into rooms so small and so ill ventilated (many of them without any light at all), that not only in them the decencies of life cannot be observed, but the air is thoroughly contaminated, and in consequence, diseases of all kinds are generated, a desperate craving for stimulants is produced, and every other kind of vice is prevalent among the over-crowded population, so that ever-increasing misery and degradation is the inevitable consequence: when we reflect that into this vast whirlpool, which is hourly consuming its victims, multitudes of the poor, but healthy and virtuous, are yearly pouring from the fresh air of the country without any possibility of recovering themselves, and that this festering, seething mass, the hotbed of every crime, has been existing from generation to generation a perfect moral hell, we cannot but tremble for the condition of society whose foundations are thus corrupt and rotten at the core. All the more dangerous is this condition of things that it is hidden for the most part from public view—only a stray wave of this troubled ocean breaking now and again with its harsh and awful moan upon the ear of fashionable life. The purlieus of poverty and crime in most of our towns are entirely separated from the busy haunts of respectable trade; and strangers who tread the principal streets, and even the most re-

spectable inhabitants, amid the display of wealth and fashion presented to the eye, seldom know or think of the seething mass of wretchedness and crime that exists so near them. Seldom do the offensive odours that haunt the crowded dens of misery find their way to the fashionable streets; no voice of human misery rises above the hum of the busy thoroughfares; no crowd of half-naked, emaciated creatures appears in the broad light of day to excite the sympathy of the better classes for their misery; but all this wretchedness hides itself, as if ashamed to be seen in the clear light of heaven, except perhaps a stray waif that is wafted here and there to excite the pity and claim the help of the charitable. Only a few noble self-denying men and women of the better class penetrate these dens as the messengers of God's love, thrilling the world occasionally by the tales of horror they tell; but the great and busy world, like the Priest and the Levite in the parable, pass by on the other side. It may not be out of place, and indeed will be quite consistent with the plan of operations we are sketching for a united Christian Association for the Promotion of Moral Science, to give a brief extract from one of those narratives of personal experience amid the crowded dens of misery in one of our large towns. It is entitled 'Notes on Old Edinburgh,' and contains such a tale of horror as fiction never conceived. We open the pamphlet almost at random, and extract the following:—

'I have given,' says the writer, at p. 26, 'the aspect of the houses and population of a particular district by daylight, avoiding all sensational details. The "night side" of the same is well known from description:—the High Street filled with a densely compacted, loiter-

ing, brawling, buying, selling, singing, cursing, quarrelsome crowd—every fifth man and woman the worse for drink so early as ten at night; a nocturnal market vigorously proceeds under difficulties, men and women puffing their wares with stentorian voices and coarse wit; barrows flaring with lights, from which the poorest of the poor are buying the unwholesome refuse of the shops, stale fish, and stale vegetables; boys vending laces, nuts, whistles; women hawking tin and crockery ware; all eager, pushing, poor. Add to these, exhibitors of penny shows and penny cheats, the singers of low and improper songs, the vendors of popular melodies and penny narratives of crime, and an idea may be formed of the noisy traffic of High Street. As the night goes on, the crowd becomes more drunk and criminal, until the legal hour of closing the spirit shops, when hundreds of pallid, ragged wretches are vomited forth upon the street to carry terror into their dark and crowded homes. The majority are half mad, and almost wholly desperate. Men and women savage with drink are biting, scratching, mauling each other, and the air is laden with blasphemies, brutal shouts from the strong, cries from the weak; blows are dealt aimlessly; infants at midnight cry on the wet street for mothers drunk in the gutters or police cells; young girls or boys are locked out for the night by parents frantic with drink; viragos storm; policemen here and there drag an offender out of the crowd amid the chaffing and coarse laughter of young girls bearing the outward marks of a life of degradation; mothers with infants in their arms lie helpless in the gutters, to be trundled off to the final ignominy of the police cell; wretches scarcely clothed, whom the daylight

knows not, shrink stealthily to some foul cellar lair; and all this and worse than this, from the Tron down the Canongate and along the Cowgate and in the Grassmarket, and in numbers of lanes and alleys, broad and narrow, which border upon them.

‘The district we visited by day we visited also by night, to find that at eleven p.m. the whole population of the lands previously described was astir, mostly from evil, partly from the impossibility of quiet; that small children were still out among the influences of the closes and the street, and that there was no sign the night had come, except the darkness and the increased overcrowding of many of the rooms. The dark narrow passages were in several places almost impassable, owing to the dead-drunk men who lay across them; the rooms were thronged and stifling; and sick and well, drunk and sober, vicious and virtuous, were all huddled together with only a pretence of separation. Whole families were sitting in the dark, or cowering round fires which only rendered the darkness visible. “A horror of great darkness” rested on all the houses. The noise was hideous. Decent people might well be afraid of going to bed. Half the inmates were under the influence of drink. Drunkards tumbled up the long dark stairs and reeled down the dark passages with shouts and imprecations, destitute even of the instinct which teaches a wild beast the way to its own den. Sounds of brawling, fighting, and revelry came from many of the rooms. Here, a drunkard was kicking through the panels of a neighbour’s door; there, two dead-drunk women lay on a heap of straw; here, a half-tipsy virago protested to us, with the air of a tragedy queen, that “she took in none but respectable



lodgers;" there, a man mad with drink tore his wife's throat with his nails. One room presented a scene of disgusting revelry and vice. In the next, a feeble woman was stilling the moans of a dying child. . . . It was Saturday night, and over the din and discord of city sins, and over the wail of city sorrows, came the sweet sound of St. Giles's bells announcing that the Sabbath had begun.'

Have Christians who are fighting over their narrow differences, instead of uniting against the common foe, no responsibility for this state of things which exists, not in the Old Town of Edinburgh alone, but more or less in every large town throughout the kingdom? How long are these fearful plague-spots to exist in our land? Is this voice of misery, degradation, and crime to continue sounding its mournful melancholy wail from generation to generation, while every other social abuse has its multitudes of reformers? But the vast majority of the wealthy and respectable among professing Christians, if ever they think of this state of things, are thanking God that they are not as these wretched outcasts. True, Christian effort among some of the evangelical Churches has not been wanting; but, often isolated and even antagonistic to each other, they have scarce more than touched this corrupting mass with their healing waters. The amelioration of the condition of these lapsed masses is one of the most difficult moral problems of the day, and nowhere can the Association find a nobler scope for the application of Christian moral science than in the devising and practically carrying out the best means for their social and spiritual elevation. What can be a nobler sphere for the efforts of Christian men than the purifying,

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elevating, and Christianizing these miserable, degraded, godless beings, and grappling with this great social problem in its many-sided aspect? Those who have studied the question well know that it is not spiritual influences alone that are wanted for the purpose. In fact, in many cases, without the physical amelioration of the lapsed masses, all spiritual, Christianizing influences are next to useless. A few here and there, who have the means of maintaining the decencies of life and of procuring respectable clothing, may be brought to a condition of Church-going and Church-membership; but in the vast majority of cases, the contamination of the surrounding corruption and the impossibility of getting separated from evil society make missionary effort almost hopeless. The first effort necessary is for the improvement of their physical condition, to separate the virtuous from the vicious, to get better homes for all in whom there is any self-respect left, where the pure air of heaven can be breathed and the decencies of life observed, and to find employment for those who are willing to work. Looking at the problem in the lowest view, of a mere physical improvement of the lapsed masses, what a blessing it would be not only to themselves but to society at large, if this great waste of human life and energy could be utilized. Think how many thousands of pounds drawn from the ratepayers and the nation at large are sunk yearly in this 'Slough of Despond,' without any corresponding advantage; how much it costs the country year by year for the punishment of offenders that are educated in this training school of iniquity. Think how many lives that might have been useful and happy are here spent in idleness and misery,

or are cut short through poverty, vice, and the pestilential vapours that are daily breathed; how many characters capable of noble deeds are here destroyed; how much muscular activity is weakened or wasted through idleness and vice; and how much ingenuity is perverted in beggary and crime that might have enriched and blessed mankind. Above all, think of so many little children born to an inheritance of ignorance and misery, that if separated early from the homes of their birth and subjected to Christianizing influences, might have been the hope and the pride of the nation, instead of its curse and its shame. If he is a benefactor to his country who at great expense and labour drains some vast marsh or stagnant lake that is spreading its pestilential vapours on every side and blighting all that is near it, and who turns this plague-spot into fertile fields on which there grows the waving corn and the green grass as food for man and for beast, how much nobler the field of usefulness for a Christian Moral Science Association in investigating the problem how this great waste of life and energy in our large towns can be utilized for the production of honest labour, and in practically carrying it out. Vast sums are annually spent by Government and by private enterprise in undertakings for the public good, but we know of no purpose for which a new application of the national funds could be more profitably made than in reclaiming the moral wastes of our country, by loans of money for the building of healthy homes for the poverty-stricken, vice-ruined inhabitants of our large towns, and in providing for them honest labour. Looking at the problem as one of mere political economy, when labour is so scarce and its price consequently

so great as to make many businesses unprofitable, we ask, might not something be done through the influence of an International Christian Science Association in forcing on the Government of the day the duty of grappling in some way or other with this great evil, which is lying like a smouldering volcano at the very foundation of our social life? And then, with the aid of the public purse and of all who are interested in stemming the tide of misery and degradation, might the many thousands at the bottom of the social scale be in due time lifted up into such a position of usefulness and independence, as that the beneficent efforts of Christian evangelization may not be wasted, as they are very much at present, but exercise their proper influence.

In the meantime, even without the aid of national resources, the Association could employ all its powers in grappling with the problem as best it may. Among a certain class of the lapsed masses, those who are not reduced to extreme poverty, much good might be done by well-sustained and united Christian effort. Portions of the poorer districts of our large towns might be selected by way of experiment, mapped out, and thoroughly explored by local committees of the Association, so many houses being set apart for every two or three individuals; interesting reports, carefully prepared, of their condition, with suggestions for their amelioration, could be read and discussed at the annual meetings of the congress, under the proper branch of inquiry. At the same time, the committee might employ all the evangelical agencies within their reach, for the purpose of bringing the beneficent influences of religion to bear on the outcasts—of making them, not members of

this or that branch of the Christian Church, but true Christians if possible; and then, when they had become impressed with the necessity of attending Gospel ordinances, allowing them a free choice as to which denomination they should join. We are firmly convinced that a partial missionary effort, extending over a large district, especially if very wretched and poor, is almost useless; and that it is far more beneficial to select a very limited district and work it thoroughly. We are further convinced that the deplorable condition of so many of our countrymen in large towns must be brought more prominently before the public; that the nation needs a great stirring up, till it becomes thoroughly alive both to the evil itself and the danger that attends it; that every professing Christian must be made to feel that he is so far individually responsible for this state of things; and then, just as the nation has in past ages been stirred to its depths by the full revelation of the evils of slavery and slave trade in our colonies, till it rose almost as one man and bade the oppressed go free, so, when the state of many a dark and desolate moral waste existing in our very midst shall be fully revealed, we may expect that both money and men will flow in, till there be a sure means of grappling with the evil. What a noble sight will it be to see Christians of all denominations bending their united energies and consecrating their time and their means for the removal of this plague-spot of our Christian country.

We may suggest also another sphere of practical philanthropy which would by and by open up before this Association of Christian men, *viz. that of missionary and philanthropic operations abroad.* When we reflect

what a few noble men, associated together for philanthropic purposes, such as Wilberforce, Buxton, Macaulay, and others, were able to accomplish thirty-five years ago in the liberation of all slaves within the British dominions, and also in the abolition of many other disgraceful systems of cruelty at home and abroad, we may reasonably infer that a united Christian Association could bring a greater influence to bear on those great moral abuses which still prevail, such as the slave-trade of Africa, than a few private individuals, however noble their efforts, could be supposed to wield.

And especially in the field of foreign missions might we expect glorious results to follow. It is a sad and humiliating thing that our numerous sectarian differences should be projected upon the foreign mission-field, where they confound the inquiring heathen and hinder the progress of the Gospel. However great union of sympathy and also of action there may be among many of our foreign missionaries of different denominations, still the variety of Church nomenclature and their separate places and forms of worship are apt to confound the heathen and bring a scandal upon the Christian name. But we would hail the day (and who knows but this Association may be the means of bringing it about?) when there shall be but one mission board of all evangelical denominations throughout the country, sending forth their missionaries, not as Church of England men, or Presbyterians, or Baptists, or under any denominational character, but simply as Christian ministers, to convert the heathen from the error of their ways and fight the Lord's battle in perfect accord; so that when congregations are

drawn together, and an outward organization is needed, they may devise that form of Church government which, after earnest prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and in their united wisdom, they shall deem best fitted for the infant Church, thus acting together in the spirit of the Apostles and their immediate successors when they made their first inroads on the heathen world.

We have thus indicated what might form not only some of the subjects of consideration for a Christian Moral Science Association, but the practical application of its principles. The one cannot be divorced from the other in its proper working; and while both form a varied and most interesting sphere of labour, we should find scope in it for all sanctified intellect, whether of a theoretical or practical order. Union of Christian sentiment and purpose being the basis, it is possible to found on it a superstructure of Christian thought and action, which shall tower in moral majesty and grandeur, a proof to the world of the power of a living Christianity, and shall extend its beneficent influence far and wide over the earth and down to future generations. There are many other subjects of inquiry into the principles of Christian moral science and their practical application, besides those we have indicated, which would open up before the Association, ranging themselves under some one or other of the general heads of discussion; and while engaged in their consideration, the members would be able not only to bring to light new facts in their science and new developments of old truths, but would, by their free and candid discussion, help to form public opinion regarding them. And with these facts and principles

fully investigated at the annual congress, and the best practical suggestions considered, the members or several committees could go forth to fulfil the duties assigned to them, working hand in hand and bringing the whole force of sound reference and Christian influence to bear upon their labours.

And would not the spectacle itself be well fitted to attract a new attention to the principles of our holy faith, of so many working together, not only as men actuated by a common interest, but as Christian fellow-workers with God? It would be at length a practical realization of that craving which exists in the minds of many of the great and good in the present age for Christian unity. It would help to break down those barriers which sectarianism so powerfully sets up against the common action of those who have so many feelings and principles and hopes in common. Earnest Christian men brought into close contact in much of the grand work of the Christian life, would begin to think better of each other; caste prejudices would be softened; points of difference would become invisible in the strong light of the more important matters of agreement; much of the reproach hurled by the worldly and profane against the disunion among professing Christians would cease; and there would be presented to the world the spectacle of one great visible Church of Christ, gathered out of and embracing all the evangelical Churches of the land, striving together for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and 'keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'



## CHAPTER VI.

### ON THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE.

WITHOUT laying claim to the unenviable character of a modern prophet, we may, in connection with our subject of Visible Church Unity, take a brief glance at the Church of the future, as it is likely to be manifested under the operation of those laws of the external development and adaptation of eternal truth to the ever-varying condition of the Christian life which we have endeavoured in the early part of this essay to trace, and to be modified by such an institution as an Association for Promoting Christian Moral Science. It is always a dangerous thing to venture on the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy, of which the principles are so various and so little understood, that any success is generally accidental, and want of it tends to bring religion into contempt. The use of unfulfilled prophecy *now* seems to be, not to give us an insight into the future, except in a very general way, but to strengthen our faith in the divinity and inspiration of the Scriptures, when it is fulfilled. But there is a certain degree of light which the philosophical investigation of past and present events, and their relation

to the progress of Christ's kingdom, may cast upon the unrevealed future, that if cautiously and reverently viewed, may become truly prophetic.

We have presented to us three permanent elements which, amid the constant mutation of human affairs, may afford us a pretty confident ground for forecasting the future; the first, the manifestations of corrupt and unenlightened human nature, its passions, hopes, interests, and the like, especially in relation to Gospel truth; secondly, the laws according to which the Church develops itself in its relations to Christian social and individual life; and thirdly, the expressed purposes of God in reference to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom and His past mode of carrying out those purposes.

1. As the principles of unenlightened and unregenerate human nature and its manifestations in relation to the Gospel are ever very much the same, we can readily enough draw the inference that they will continue in the future very much as they have been in the past—that wherever the Gospel is vitally manifested, or new life instilled into a Church, there a corresponding spirit of antagonism will be engendered, and the basest passions excited against Gospel truth, as before. In every great advance or reformation of religion, there has been a mustering of antagonistic forces. Yet this has not been always an evil, but sometimes an advantage to religion, as exhibiting the opposition in its true colours, so that it stands out distinctly from Christianity, with its position clearly defined. It is always an advantage in warfare to find your enemy under his true colours, instead of meeting him under the guise of a friend, when he may treacherously gain an

advantage over you. It has, at the same time, often happened that this very mustering of opposing forces, which threatened to overwhelm Christianity, was the sure signal for their downfall. It is said the darkest period of night is just before the dawn, and so the gathering darkness of moral night, caused by the prevalence of superstition and irreligion, is often the precursor of a bright Gospel day. 'The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. *Then* shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure.'

Another phase of unenlightened human nature in relation to Gospel truth, is that waywardness of heart and narrowness of mind which leads men to set up artificial barriers, to elevate minor Christian distinctions into great religious principles, and thus to thwart the purposes of the most enlightened advocates of the truth. In the age of Christ and of His Apostles, it showed itself in the spirit of Pharisaism; in the present age, it has a wide and very powerful influence among all classes. Exactly in the inverse proportion to the real power of religion over the heart is the tendency to fight about the externals of religion, and make the Shibboleths of a Church the *sine qua non* of a living Christian; while, on the other hand, the greater the influence of religion over the heart, the more does the Christian learn to value what is truly essential in comparison with what is merely transient and human.

2. A second principle we have indicated as affording

us pretty confident grounds of calculation as to the condition of the Church of the future, *is the known laws of the Church's development and relation to the Christian's social and individual life.* The development of the Christian Church bears some analogy to the manifestation of the Divine life when it has been enkindled in the believer's heart. That manifestation is from within outwards, the living principle in the heart modifying the acts of the life, and gradually bringing it into conformity to the mind of Christ. No doubt there are rules set before the Christian for the guidance of his life, but it is the spiritual influences within that make them a law unto him which he loves to obey. So the living spirit within the Church will ever strive to manifest itself in suitable outward forms; in fact, the purer and brighter the life, the more has it a tendency to select those forms and that organization which will best advance the interests of religion, at the same time carrying out the spirit of the Scripture principles for the advancement of the truth. The great body of believers, renewed in the spirit of their mind, will be enabled, under the promise of heavenly wisdom, to devise the best policy in relation to the inward condition of the Church. These forms must be the natural development of the living spirit within the Church. It is useless to fight about forms, if the spirit that once animated them is gone. It is a common enough thing to find, many ages after the establishment of some branch of the Church of Christ, those forms which were at first the natural outgrowth of the revived condition of the Church becoming worn out and useless, because the spirit that once animated them is gone, or the condition of society is changed. We have seen that it is

the intention of the Author of all wisdom that the principles of the outward organization of the Christian Church should be so expansive as to adapt themselves to every condition of Christian society, and every phase of the Christian social life; and hence, when any forms or modes of Church policy have ceased to fulfil the objects originally intended by them, or to become the proper vehicles for conserving and propagating the truth, they should be lopped off like the withered branches of a tree to which no sap ascends, that the ecclesiastical constitution may become more vigorous and be more suited to the spirit of the age.

In every revived condition of the Church, there is always a tendency to union and communion among Christians. The strife and the heat of reformation times, together with the persecution which generally ensues, has always a tendency to make people think and act together on the great essentials of religion; and it is only afterwards and by degrees that schism is introduced. This may be well illustrated, not only in the case of the great propagation of the Christian religion which succeeded the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, but also in the history of the Reformation Churches of England and Scotland for the past three hundred years.

3. We have, thirdly, as a ground for anticipating the Church's future condition, *God's expressed purposes in reference to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom and His past mode of carrying out those purposes.* Although the passions of the unrenewed man and his antagonism to Christian truth be the same in every age, we have also at the same time, as a permanent influence, the guiding arm of the Church's great Head, who has

pledged Himself to advance her interests and make her successful over every opposition. The arm of Providence has often hitherto delivered her out of difficulty and danger when the most powerful earthly forces have been arrayed against her and there seemed no way of escape, and sometimes by means the very contrary to that which to human wisdom seemed the best. If we look back at the history of Christianity, we shall find, under the guidance of its great Head pledged to its final triumph, the means of its deliverance from danger and the laws of its propagation to have been various; sometimes by a great revival, as at Pentecost; sometimes by violent persecution, the blood of the martyrs becoming the seed of the Church; sometimes in alliance with human authority, and sometimes in opposition to it, and occasionally by the aid of some great invention or discovery: in all these and other ways the Church has in times past received a new impetus to impel her onward to her destined goal. But there are sometimes periods of gradual prosperity and decay in her history, intermingling with each other in such a way, that for an ordinary spectator it is difficult to say whether she is making progress or actually going back, periods in which Christianity is advancing in one country or among one religious body, and declining in another; yet all the while this gradual progress or decay may be but the preparation for a surer advance and a more glorious mission, like the calm or occasional recession of the waves that precedes their gathering to roll on with mighty force till they strike against the shore.

Now, while it is impossible absolutely to predict in what way an impetus may be given to the cause of

religion in the times that are approaching, whether by any violent revolution, or by an unusual quickening of the Churches by the Holy Spirit or otherwise, we may yet discern some signs in the present which, judging from our experience of the past, will enable us to learn something of the Church of the future. For instance, there is on the one hand a great mustering of the forces of heterodoxy and superstition and irreligion. Old exploded errors, long since driven out of the field, are appearing under a new guise, supported by men of undoubted talent, who throw over them the fascinations of their genius; infidel and atheistical views are boldly propounded and widely propagated by means of periodicals and other cheap literature, which find their way to thousands of homes; Popery is making rapid strides both among the wealthier classes and among the extreme poor; in connection with which, and as paving the way to its success, there is a strong tendency to elevate mere Church forms and ecclesiastical distinctions into a religious dogma, to concentrate the energies and the affections upon what is merely æsthetical in religion to the exclusion of the spiritual and pure, to cling to old worn-out forms of worship, and venerate them because they are old.

But may not this mustering of forces by the upholders of formalism and irreligion be for them but the beginning of the end, like the spasmodic efforts of the death struggle ere the body lies still in death, or the gatherings of a dark thunder-cloud that is to usher in the dawn of a bright and beautiful day. Yet these signs are well calculated to alarm and stir up those who have the interests of Christ's kingdom at heart, and make them overlook all minor differences in their union

against the common foe. The very fierceness of the opposition, and the fact of their making so evident progress, will not be without its use, if it cause all true Christians to take immediate alarm and join their forces together to fight the battle of the Lord.

On the other hand, as a bright side to this picture, there are not wanting some gratifying symptoms of a breaking down of those ecclesiastical barriers which have hitherto kept men of different religious denominations so far apart, and of a tendency towards Christian brotherhood among the higher spirits of the different sects, who are beginning to see that their interest as well as their duty lies in union against the common foe. We see it already making way in the United States of America, where several denominations, attached to very various ecclesiastical polities, have already held brotherly meetings to unite themselves closer to each other. Nor are signs of it wanting nearer home. That natural brotherhood which association in trade tends to effect, is also producing its effects in the higher sphere of religion; for those who are engaged together in the same commercial enterprises during the week, and who, though often of different ranks, are brought, through the levelling tendencies of the age, into the closest natural relationship to each other, can scarcely be expected to keep up an artificial barrier of separation from each other in their religious life. It may be in part owing to this that there is a growing tendency to look more at what is vital, than at what is merely outward in the Christian life, to consider the non-essentials in worship and Church government as of less importance in comparison with the great truths of salvation.



Now a Christian Moral Science Association such as we have sketched, is both an attempt to realize this idea, and a means of enlarging and intensifying it. Without a growing feeling of the importance of Christian unity, this Association would be impossible; and on the other hand, unless the idea were embodied in some such outward organization, it could have no practical effect for good. The realization of visible Church unity in this Association will not only bring men who are of the same way of thinking into closer union, but may have the effect in due time of uniting under one religious denomination several of those sects which already approach each other so nearly, but which are kept apart more through associations of the past, than by any apparent essential differences. It would be a great step, however, gained in the mean time, if, through its influence, some communion of Church services were established among evangelical Christians, so that those who hold the same great saving doctrines of faith could worship occasionally together as brethren of a common Father.

God's will in reference to the conditions of the Church's progress must be sought in His Providence as well as in His Word; and we have shown it to be a well-established law of the outward organization of the Church of Christ that it should ever so far adapt itself to the condition of the society among whom it is planted, and to the peculiar manifestation of the religious life. There can be little doubt, therefore, that the new and interesting phases of Christian life that are appearing among us in the present age, will gradually mould old established institutions so as to make them suitable vehicles for its manifestation. Old forms of

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thought and of political and religious life are disappearing; institutions venerable with age, but which are not now answering the purpose of their appointment, are crumbling down beneath the force of public opinion, and new organizations more congenial to the feelings and conditions of modern society are taking their place. Reform is the order of the day. 'Old things are passing away,' and all things are being made new. This is the case, to some extent at least, with religious as well as civil institutions. We must rid ourselves of the idea that any outward Church polity is necessarily permanent and unchangeable as the Divine truth itself, or that ecclesiastical constitutions cannot be merged together or form new combinations to meet the altered circumstances of the age; for every great quickening of human thought and revival of religion has either modified or entirely changed the religious organizations subsisting at the time. That craving for union which, as we have already said, exists among the high spirits of all Churches, and which is already making itself to be heard in essays and lectures and Church resolutions, is sure, in course of time, to modify existing institutions, that they may express more of a visible Christian unity. This tendency towards union, as a manifestation of the religious life, if it is not sought from mere political or worldly ends, is a hopeful sign of the age, and will in due time as surely find its embodiment in suitable outward institutions, as has the ordinary Christian life of the community in every age embodied itself in a suitable Church polity. The stronger it grows, the more will it make all existing institutions and relations bend to its influence. Fostered by such associations as this, whose claims we have been advocating, it

will move on with irresistible sway, and perhaps ere another half century have expired, there may be witnessed a complete revolution and a unifying of our principal religious institutions; for, while the past ages have witnessed a breaking up of the great Reformation Churches by frequent schisms, the future may witness a corresponding healing of divisions more and more, and the absorbing of many evangelical sects into one or two great Churches admirably adapted to the spirit of the times. But amid the breaking down of the old and the setting up of the new, there will be doubtless much antagonism to encounter. Such a revolution, be it gradual or be it sudden, will find the passions and interests of worldly and irreligious men arrayed against the Church; and disorders and confusion will arise during the change of old established institutions and habits of thought. But the blessings of real communion and union of action among Christians, whether they are all comprehended under one name or not, will more than outweigh the disorder and antagonism that must ensue on the great transition period of the Church's future. And when at length a real union is secured, and a calm succeeds the previous period of strife and unrest, that generation which shall have entered on this new and glorious stage of Christian life, will look back with mingled pity and wonder on the dissensions and mutual upbraidings of Christian sects in past ages—with pity, that religious men should have so magnified their points of difference, while there was so much of far higher importance about which they agreed; and with wonder, that spiritual life could have been sustained amid the noise and recriminations of sectarian strife.

There can be no doubt that those Churches alone

are destined to permanency, amid the upheavings of this transition period, which are possessed with a true Christian spirit of love and brotherhood, and zeal for the extension of Christ's kingdom. Whether under their present or another form, it matters little, if they are suitable spiritual organisms for the preservation and spread of the Gospel of truth. Let there be a stirring up of the religious zeal and a more earnest cultivation of spiritual life in all Churches, and there will be less need for controversy about external organizations. Let there be real life, and it will find for itself a suitable outward embodiment; whatever is obstructive to its development will soon yield to the vigorous growth of the life within. For, while the Divine Author of Christianity has pledged Himself in His Word that its eternal truth, and whatever is essential to its manifestation, shall remain through all ages the same, He has assured us all by the dealings of His Providence that the ecclesiastical polity, or those outward forms in which its relation is manifested to the world, will be ever changing and adapting themselves to the manifestations of the religious spirit within the Church of Christ.

‘ Our little systems have their day,  
They have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights of Thee,  
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.’

Speed, Lord, the time when the Redeemer's intercessory prayer shall be fulfilled for His people on earth,  
‘ That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me,  
and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that  
the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me!’



ESSAY III.

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN MORAL  
SCIENCE?

OR,

THE NATURE AND PROVINCE OF CHRISTIAN  
ETHICS DEFINED AND DETERMINED.

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‘In te, Domine, speravi.’—*Psalm xxxi.* 1.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

WHAT is Christian moral science? Happily for the interests of society, not less than of true religion, this grand life-question has at last been raised with some likelihood of securing for it a complete and final answer.

At first sight there may seem to attach to the matter thus mooted no special importance. But such *prima facie* view of the subject is as far as possible from the truth. Those who thus think can be but very imperfectly acquainted with the vital principles and, we might almost say, the lost relations of truth with truth, which a faithful answer to such an inquiry would be likely to evoke and discover. Truths have not only their own absolute and intrinsic value, but they have also, in many instances, an equally important value relatively to a given age or nation. It is thus in the case before us. The development of a rationalistic philosophy upon the one hand, and of a materialistic and atheistic philosophy upon the other, not only in Germany and France, but also in our own country, has rendered it indispensable that the principles of religion and of morality should, in as far as that may be pos-



sible, be re-stated and established upon a scientific as well as upon a Scriptural basis.

In France the principles enunciated by Rousseau and Voltaire, and afterwards carried to their legitimate issues in the rank atheism of the Encyclopædists and the 'Système de la Nature,' are far from extinct even yet. There may not be now, as then, any open expression given to the well-known wish, 'that the last king might be strangled with the bowels of the last priest<sup>1</sup>,' but under a less repulsive form the infamous doctrines which dominated in France in the eighteenth century have exercised, and still do exercise, notwithstanding the practical refutation which those principles received in the orgies of the Revolution, a vast and formidable influence. In fact, in the Positive philosophy of Auguste Comte, atheism, learning from the past the folly of a purely destructivist method, has assumed a strictly constructive character. It has made a religion of its atheism, which, by the intention of its founder, is, upon the ruins of all other religious faiths, to set up for itself absolute and universal sway. Positivism is, in its spirit of propagandism, as ambitious as was Mahometanism itself.

In Germany, again, ethics has been relegated to the department of psychology, or rather to that of ontology. Since Kant's time most writers have regarded morals and theology as but parts—and very subordinate parts indeed—of metaphysics. But more: the caution with which this line of speculation was at first opened up by the great author of the Critical Philosophy was speedily abandoned, and the German mind, naturally repugnant

<sup>1</sup> Lectures on the History of Literature, by Frederic Schlegel, Lect. XIII. p. 307.

to atheism, lapsed in its systems of ontology and ontological morals into the alternative error of belief in an impersonal God, or of unmistakeable Pantheism.

Nor are other indications wanting of the progress of unbelief. The Biblical critic is well aware of the detriment done to theological science by an application of the principles of interpretation employed by Niebuhr on the mythological portions of Roman history, to the miraculous histories of the Word of God. Naturalism is the result—naturalism in theology and in morals. In the Christologies of Strauss and Renan, not to name others nearer home, we see an endeavour to eliminate from religion all that is supernatural, and indeed all that is super-rational, and so to resolve the Christian faith into mere morality—employing that term in the narrowest and least truthful sense in which it has ever been received, to designate a mere art,—nothing more, in brief, than a system of rules and maxims for the proper conduct of human life. In such an estimate of Christianity, the Redeemer occupies a footing strictly analogous to that of Moses, Confucius, Zoroaster, or Lycurgus. The morality of the New Testament is reckoned of no higher authority than any other systems of morality. Its superlative merits will be readily admitted, and upon these grounds will it be held to be entitled to especial and distinguished consideration, but upon these grounds alone.

Hence, as we have the science of comparative grammar, and the science of comparative mythology, we are already more than warned to expect a new science of comparative morality.

Such being briefly the condition in which the science of morals now finds itself placed, it will be sought in

the following pages to lay down the immutable basis of morals, and to discuss, as far as may be done compatibly with the narrow limits to which we are restricted, the facts of which the science takes cognizance, in such manner as that, and in order that, we may thus place it outside of the region of rationalism and scepticism.

## CHAPTER II.

### DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

To recur to the question with which we set out, we may ask, What is moral science? and next, What is Christian moral science? Other related topics of inquiry will of course arise in the progress of such an investigation. There is, as we have seen, some talk of comparative morals, just as we speak of comparative mythology and comparative philology. Is, therefore, morality one or many? Similarly, when we speak of Christian ethics do we thereby draw any natural distinction between different kinds of morality, each equally valid, only in differing degrees? It is customary to speak of morality as distinct from religion. Is there in reality any such distinction? Again; natural morality is popularly discriminated from revealed morality, in like manner as natural religion is placed in contrast with that of revelation. In how far is such a discrimination justifiable? What is its precise significance? And how far is a natural morality possible and practicable? Will nature, when interpreted, furnish, apart from revelation, reliable information on moral topics? Is a revelation, in brief, necessary or unnecessary to a sound science of ethics?

These are but a few of the many questions which are likely to arise in a discussion such as that which lies before us, and which it is highly desirable to have decisively settled, and the settlement of which will doubtless materially help us to a more accurate appreciation of the true nature of morality.

As to the denomination of the science, it may be remarked that the term *morals*, from *mos*, is, upon several grounds, open to objection. Like its corresponding German name, *Sittenlehre*, it is ambiguous, and may denote either the science of manners (*Lehre von den Sitten*), or the science of the moral or of morality (*Lehre von der Sitte, d. h. dem Sittlichen*). In German the more accurate designation would be, not *Sittenlehre*, but *Sittlichkeitslehre*. The former, however, has notwithstanding been customarily in use since Mosheim.

‘The name ethics,’ observes Wuttke, ‘is the oldest, having been already in use in the time of Aristotle. This term  $\eta\theta o\varsigma$ , a stem-modification from  $\epsilon\theta o\varsigma$ , from the root  $\epsilon\zeta\omega$  to *set*, med. to *sit*, is employed by Homer, and equals the seat, abode, home—thence later, the fixed and determinate home of the spirit, wherein the soul feels itself homed as in the province peculiar to itself,—also the custom (die Sitte), chiefly in the sense of habit, the mode of action which has become a second nature. This sense of  $\eta\theta\eta$  occurs in the New Testament<sup>1</sup>. But the concept extends itself further to that of the moral, properly so called, as the habit objectivized, which for the individual comes with the authority of law:  $\eta\theta o\varsigma$  is in that case a spiritual force to which the individual subjects himself in contrast to the crude intractableness of the untutored savage, and which, in

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. xv. 33.

as far as it is not alien from and opposed to human nature, constitutes *character*<sup>1</sup>. The Romans for the most part employed the term *mores* to designate the same thing; thence Cicero and Seneca already speak of a *philosophia moralis*. Among ourselves the science was formerly mostly denominated ‘morals,’ *theologia s. philosophia moralis*, frequently also *theologia s. philosophia practica*. But after that the deistic illuminism had seized upon morals and degraded them to soulless platitudes, the term received so prejudiced a signification that subsequently it was avoided, and together with its German name the Aristotelian designation came again into acceptation<sup>2</sup>.’ Dorner testifies to the same effect: ‘The best name for this science is *ethics*, or doctrine of morals (*Sittenlehre*), as is clear from the relation of this word to the three fundamental concepts of morals, —law or duty, virtue, and chief good. *Mos* or *mores* (whence *disciplina moralis*) respects rather the outward phenomenon than the inner source, and is not commensurate with the Greek *ἥθος*. *Mores* denotes indeed the character, but not the comprehensive source; whilst, on the other hand, *ἥθος* includes the habit, the appertaining conduct; and that not merely as an empirical *manner*, *mos*, which may be evil, but as what is sanctioned, what is according to order and rule<sup>3</sup>.’

Ethics is, therefore, manifestly the best denomination for the *ensemble* of the science of morality. By Jeremy Bentham it has been designated *Deontology*,

<sup>1</sup> Arist. Eth. Nic. i. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Handbuch der Christl. Sittenlehre, vol. i., Einleit. i. § 1, 2<sup>te</sup> Aufl.

<sup>3</sup> Ethik, in Herzog's Real-Encyclopädie für Prot. Theol. und Kirche.

a name likely to gain increasing favour in this country, although, as signifying the doctrine or science of *duty* (τὸ δέον), it was certainly much too good a name for the utilitarian system which that author propounded.

Now ethics, deontology, or moral science, has been variously defined. And here it must be premised that the problems of ethical science admit of being treated either (1) independently, *per se*, and out of all relation to the existence of sin; or (2) in relation to *sin* and the regeneration of the moral life of man through redemption. Accordingly, as the laws, facts, and phenomena of which ethics takes cognizance are treated after the one or the other of these methods, there is furnished to us in the one case mere moral science, in the other, that much more precious, invaluable, and exhaustive science known distinctively as Christian Ethics.

It may not be unprofitable to consider some of the definitions which have already been furnished by the most celebrated writers. And first of ethics, deontology, or moral science *per se*—or *an sich*, as the Germans say—as contradistinguished from Christian ethics.

Aristotle regards ethics as ἡ περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα φιλοσοφία—‘the philosophy pertaining to human affairs’<sup>1</sup>. This would make ethics include morals, politics, economics, psychology, logic, rhetoric, æsthetics, and history. Kant in one place defines ethics as ‘the science of the laws of freedom,’ as distinguished from physics, which is ‘the science of the laws of nature.’ The entire passage runs thus:—

‘The old Greek philosophy divided itself into three sciences—*Physics*, *Ethics*, and *Logic*, and we cannot

<sup>1</sup> Eth. Nic. x. 3.

improve upon it. . . . . All perception of the reason (*Vernunftkenntniss*) is either *material*, and concerns itself with an object; or *formal*, and employs itself merely upon the form of the understanding and of the reason, and the universal rules of thought generally, without distinction of objects. *Formal* philosophy is called Logic; but the material (philosophy), which has to do with definite objects, and the laws to which they are subject, is in turn twofold. For these laws are either laws of nature, or laws of freedom. The science of the first is called *Physics*, that of the second *Ethics*. The one is called Natural Philosophy, the other Moral Philosophy<sup>1</sup>.

This should be qualified by what Kant says afterwards concerning the distinction between ethical and juridical science. 'Legislation,' he says, 'is distinguished in view of motives. That which makes an action a duty, and in like manner transforms this duty into a motive, is *ethical*. But that which does not include the latter in the law, and by consequence allows a motive other even than that of duty, is *juridical*<sup>2</sup>.' Hence the province formerly occupied by ethics is subdivided into two sub-provinces, respectively designated by him ethics proper (or *Fugendlekre*), and juridical science (or *Rechtslekre*). These 'differ moreover not so much through their different duties, as rather through the difference of legislation. The legislation of ethics cannot be exterior: the legislation of jurisprudence can<sup>3</sup>.' As is said at p. 43 of the same work,—'All

<sup>1</sup> Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaph. der Sitten*, Vorrede, vol. viii. p. 3; *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. Rosenkranz und Schubert.

<sup>2</sup> *Einleitung in die Metaphysik der Sitten*, iii. pp. 18, 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 20.



duties are either juridical duties (*officia juris*), that is, those for which exterior legislation is possible; or ethical duties (*officia virtutis s. ethica*), for which exterior legislation is impossible<sup>1</sup>. In the latter case, as Kant proceeds to remark, the law is exclusively and purely subjective. Of the value of the distinction thus drawn by the subtle intellect of the sage of Königsberg, the reader is left to form his own opinion.

Schleiermacher, in *Philosophical Morals*, assumes two chief sciences—that of nature, and that of reason, each of which in turn admits of treatment as either empirical or speculative. The empirical science of reason, says Schleiermacher, is *history*; and the speculative science of reason is *ethics*. Ethics is thus ‘das Erkennen des Wesens der Vernunft’—‘the knowledge of the essence of the reason<sup>2</sup>’; and stands related to history as speculation to experience. But this definition covers, as may be seen at a glance, nearly as wide an area as that of Aristotle above cited. Modifying this position, however, Schleiermacher cuts out of this vast field of thought a place for psychology, which he defines as the ‘empirical knowledge of the activity of the spirit<sup>3</sup>’. Even yet, however, ethics was left to occupy too wide a province; for, with the exception of physics, it embraced, as thus defined, the whole of philosophic theology and the philosophy of history. Hence Schleiermacher defined ethics yet more specifically, as ‘speculative knowledge concerning the total

<sup>1</sup> Einleitung in die Metaphysik der Sitten, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Entwurf eines Systems der Sittenlehre, p. 34, ed. Alex. Schweizer; Schleiermacher's *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. v., 3. Abth. vol. iii., Berlin, 1835.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 37.

operation of reason upon nature<sup>1</sup>.' Again, he further defines it as 'the scientific representation of human action<sup>2</sup>.' These definitions, however, are equally unsatisfactory with the one with which Schleiermacher set out. As to the former, it is sufficient to observe that much of this so-called 'operation of reason upon nature' lies wholly outside the province of morality<sup>3</sup>, and *vice versa*. And as to the latter, it is also sufficient to remark that not action generally, but moral action in particular pertains to ethics<sup>4</sup>. But in passing it may be remarked that even these definitions, or rather determinations, concerning the nature of ethical science can only be understood as Schleiermacher understood them, by keeping steadily in view the pantheistic determinism derived by him from Fichte and Schelling, which pervaded the whole of his speculative ethics. In order to the more correct appreciation of 'the operation of reason upon nature,' or, as he otherwise terms it, 'human action,' we must remember that no very trenchant distinction was by him made between reason and nature,—the consummation of idealism being the identity of subject and object. 'Hence,' writes Schleiermacher, 'in its supreme existence nature is reason, and reason nature, idea phenomenon, and phenomenon idea; and in its highest knowledge ethics [is] physics,

<sup>1</sup> Entwurf eines Systems der Sittenlehre, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> 'Die sittliche Herzensbildung, Demuth, Wahrheitsliebe, sittliche Gesinnung überhaupt, und das ganze Gebiet rein geistigen Lebens gehört gar nicht in jene Wirksamkeit auf die Natur.' Wuttke, Handb. der Christl. Sittenlehre, vol. i. p. 6, Berlin, 1864, 2<sup>te</sup> Aufl.

<sup>4</sup> Wuttke, Christl. Sittenlehre, vol. i. Einleit. § 2, p. 6.

and physics ethics<sup>1</sup>. Hence in form, ethics and physics are alike. Physics has to do simply with what *is* and *must be*: and it is exactly so with Schleiermacher's ethics, since with what *ought to be* as contrasted with what *is*, it has absolutely no concern. The contrast established between physics and ethics by Kant, based upon the principle that the former has for its object the principle of obligation, *das sollen*, while the latter has for its object the mere facts of existence, *das sein*, is regarded by Schleiermacher as inadmissible<sup>2</sup>; for the distinction between *sein* and *sollen* is denied. What is is right; and all antagonism to law is mere seeming. Ethics is, in brief, for the laws of reason what physics is for the laws of nature, and is as sure of the harmony of the actual with those laws of reason as astronomy is of the occurrence of a calculated lunar eclipse<sup>3</sup>.

Manifestly, therefore, Schleiermacher's conception of ethical science is totally different from that ordinarily entertained by moralists, near as his definitions may approximate verbally to those of more orthodox thinkers. The instance, however, is invaluable as a specimen of pantheistic morality.

Equally objectionable is the definition of morality given by Comte—to wit, that 'morals is the science of individual man<sup>4</sup>.' But why of individual man? Because the positivist God, Humanity, can only discharge his functions by means of individuals, who are his ultimate organs. And yet, as if in direct contra-

<sup>1</sup> System der Sittenlehre, Einleit. iii. § 66, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Einleit. iii. § 63, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Catechisme Positiviste, ou Sommaire Exposition de la Religion Universelle, Pt. I. p. 58, Paris, 1852.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 59.

diction of this position, Comte tells us that moral science presupposes social science or sociology. Neander defines moral science as 'that science which concerns itself with the development of the laws for human conduct<sup>1</sup>;' and immediately afterwards he distinguishes Christian ethics as 'that science which derives these laws from the essence of Christianity<sup>2</sup>.' Jeremy Bentham defines morals as 'the art of directing the actions of man in such manner as to produce the greatest possible sum of good<sup>3</sup>.' But this, as a definition of mere morals apart from all consideration of the relations of morals to Christianity, bristles with errors. Among some of its worst characteristics we may observe:—(1) That it reduces morality to the level of a mere art; (2) That it sets up utility above right, or, in other words, bases all rights with their correlative obligations upon utility, that is, upon the tendency of actions 'to preserve from pain or the cause of pain, or to procure pleasure or the cause of pleasure<sup>4</sup>;' (3) That it traces our consciousness of the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, virtue and vice, to the purely intellectual conception of profit and loss, or of what is or is not useful; and (4) That it ignores by consequence the fundamental facts of human existence underlying all our moral intuitions,—such facts, for example, as our innate sense of the beautiful in conduct, the beautiful as contrasted with the use-

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte der christl. Ethik, herausgeg. von Dr. David Erdmann; Einleitung. Berlin, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Einleitung, § 1.

<sup>3</sup> Traité de Législation, Civile et Pénale, vol. i. ch. xii. p. 107, par Dumont, 3<sup>e</sup> edit.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. vol. i. ch. i. p. 3.

ful; our emotions of approbation or disapprobation of actions accordingly as we esteem them right or wrong (rather than advantageous and disadvantageous); and our inevitable conviction of our obligation to do the former and shun the latter, implying, as such obligation does, our responsibility to a higher power. Indeed, Bentham himself seems to have felt that this theory did not quite fairly represent the facts of the case; for in his 'Deontology' he writes:—'The mind will not be satisfied with such phrases as, "it is useless to commit murder," or "it would be useful to prevent it<sup>1</sup>."' Similar objections apply to the definition of the science of ethics given by Austin, a devoted disciple of Bentham<sup>2</sup>. According to Paley, 'moral philosophy, morality, ethics, casuistry, natural law, mean all the same thing, namely, that science which teaches men their duty and the reasons of it<sup>3</sup>'—a definition which, when we take into consideration the sense which he would attach to the word 'duty,' places morality upon much the same ground which it occupies in the system of Bentham. A writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* defines moral philosophy as 'the science of what ought to be in human character and conduct<sup>4</sup>.' But this definition of the science of morals as contradistinguished from the science of Christian ethics seems by its terms

<sup>1</sup> Deontology, vol. i. p. 35. Vide Sir James Mackintosh's Dissertation in the *Encyclop. Brit.*, eighth ed.

<sup>2</sup> Of the science of ethics he says:—'It affects to determine the test of positive law and morality, or . . . the principles whereon they must be fashioned in order that they may merit approbation.'—*The Province of Jurisprudence Determined*, vol. i. p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Moral and Political Philosophy*, Bk. I. ch. i.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. xv. p. 535, eighth ed.

to limit inquiry too much to the mere question of the rightness or wrongness of subjective and objective conduct, to the neglect of those principles and facts which determine and condition the existence of the law itself. To this objection the definition of Neander above cited is in no way amenable; while it is at the same time concise and to the purpose. 'Die Sittenlehre,' he says, 'ist diejenige Wissenschaft, welche sich damit beschäftigt, die Gesetze für menschliches Handeln zu entwickeln.' Here one word covers the objection: 'Ethics is that science which is concerned with the *development* (zu entwickeln) of the laws for human conduct.' Here its concernment is not merely with the laws of right and virtue in their application to human conduct, but also with the *development* of those laws, with, in brief, the facts and principles which determined their evolution considered both as laws objective and subjective, that is, as law without us and binding others as well as ourselves, and as law existing within us as part and parcel of our own nature and being.

But the propriety of discussing moral questions apart from their natural and inevitable implication with Christian truth, admits of the gravest doubt. Could it for one moment be shown that there is no necessary connection between the doctrines of the Christian faith and the principles of morality, then there would be no question as to the propriety of effecting a sharp separation of them the one from the other. But to show this is simply impossible. 'It must be evident that the most general doctrines of Christianity, such as those of a future judgment, and immortality, have a direct relation with everything

that can be comprehended within the widest range of moral speculation and sentiment. It will also be found that the more particular doctrines, such as those of the moral pravity of our nature, an atonement made by the sacrifice of Christ, the interference of a special Divine influence in renewing the human mind, and conducting it through the discipline for a future state, together with all the inferences, conditions, and motives resulting from them, cannot be admitted and religiously regarded, without combining in numberless instances with man's ideas on moral subjects. That writer must therefore have retired beyond the limits of an immense field of important and most interesting speculations, indeed beyond the limits of all the speculation most important to man, who can say that nothing in the religion of Christ bears, in any manner, on any part of his subject, any more than if he were a philosopher of Saturn.

‘In thus habitually interfering and combining with moral sentiments and speculations, the Christian principles will greatly modify them. The ideas infused from those principles to be combined with the moral sentiments will not appear as simply *additional* ideas in the train of thought, but as also affecting the character of the rest. . . . Now in every train of thinking in which the recognition of those principles would effect this modification, it ought to be effected: so that the very last idea within the compass of speculation which would have a different cast as a ray of the Gospel falls, or does not fall, upon it, should be faithfully presented in that light. The Christian principles cannot be true, without determining what shall be true in the mode of representing every subject in which there is anything

belonging to them by essential relation. Obviously, as far as the Gospel can go, and does by such relation with things claim to go, with a modifying action, it cannot be a matter of indifference whether it *do* go or not; for nothing on which its application would have this effect, would be equally right as so modified and as not so modified. That which is made precisely correct by this qualified condition, must therefore, separately from it, be incorrect. He who has sent a revelation to declare the theory of sacred truth, and to order the relations of all moral sentiment with that truth, cannot give his sanction at once to this final constitution, and to that which refuses to be conformed to it. He therefore disowns that which disowns the religion of Christ. And what he disowns, he condemns; thus placing all moral sentiments in the same predicament with regard to the Christian economy in which Jesus Christ placed His contemporaries—"He that is not with Me is against Me." The order of ideas dissentient from the Christian system presumes the existence, or attempts the creation, of some other economy.

‘Moral philosophers for the most part seem anxious to avoid everything that might render them liable to be mistaken for Christian divines. They regard their department as a science complete in itself; and they investigate the foundation of morality, define its laws, and affix its sanctions in a manner generally so much apart from Christianity, that the reader would almost conclude that religion to be *another* science complete in itself. . . . It is striking to observe how small a portion of the ideas which distinguish the New Testament from other books many moral philosophers



have thought indispensable to a theory in which they professed to include the sum of the duty and interests of man. A serious reader is constrained to feel that either there is too much in *that* book, or too little in theirs. He will perceive that in the inspired book, the moral principles are intimately interwoven with all those doctrines which could not have been known but through revelation. He will find also in this superior book a vast number of ideas avowedly designed to interest the *affections* in favour of all moral principles and virtues. The "quickeningspirit" thus breathed among what might else be dry and lifeless, is drawn from considerations of the Divine mercy—the compassion of the Redeemer, the assurance of aid from heaven in the difficult strife to be what the best principles prescribe, the relationship subsisting between good men on earth and those who are departed; and other kindred topics, quite out of the range to which the mere moral preceptors appear to hold themselves limited. The system of morals, as placed in the temperature of such considerations, has the character and effect of a different zone. Thus, while any given virtue, equally prescribed in the treatise of the moral philosopher and the Christian code, would in mere definition be the same in both, the manner in which it bears on the heart and conscience must be greatly different.

‘No doubt innumerable reasonings and conclusions may be advanced on moral subjects which shall be true on a foundation of their own, equally in the presence of the evangelical system and in its absence. . . . But the charge against the moral philosophers is meant to be applied to those who, not professing to have any

. . . specific and limited scope, but assuming the office of moralist in its most comprehensive character, and making themselves responsible as teachers of virtue in its whole extent, have yet quite forgotten the vital implication of ethical with evangelical truth<sup>1</sup>.

But here a new consideration arises as to what constitutes moral science when thus Christianized and perfected. Upon this point, as it is almost needless to remark, all moralists are not agreed. Many explain Christian ethics as the description of a normal life-development. But description applies rather to that which *is* than to that which *ought to be*. The description of the person of Christ as the ideal of morality, furnishes, and can furnish, only one part of Christian morals, since Christ could not exhibit in His own actual experience every phase of the moral life. Hence the explanation given by Harless of the science of Christian morals, that it is 'the theoretic representation of the Christianly-normal life-development<sup>2</sup>,' or the theoretic exhibition, in other words, of the history of the upgrowth of man as redeemed by Christ, is, as a definition, at once too comprehensive and too restricted. It is too comprehensive, because there pertains to such a life-development much that does not come properly within the province of morals, but which stands connected rather with the objective operation of the grace of God upon man as a moral subject. It is too restricted, because the science of Christian ethics must take cognizance not only of the *normal* Christian life-development, but also of the

<sup>1</sup> Essays, by John Foster, Essay IV, pp. 286-288, 324-327.

<sup>2</sup> 'Die theoretische Darstellung der christlich-normalen Lebensbewegung.'

abnormal in the development of human nature. The consideration, in brief, of these abnormal life-impulsions and life-affections constitutes an essential constituent element of the science<sup>1</sup>.

Schleiermacher defines Christian ethics as 'the exhibition of communion with God conditioned by communion with Christ the Redeemer, in as far as this constitutes the motive of all the actions of the Christian, or the description of that mode of action which originates out of the dominion of the Christian consciousness<sup>2</sup>.'

Neander considers, as we have seen, that Christian morals, and morals apart from all relations with Christianity, differ from each other in such manner that, while the latter is concerned with the development of the laws which ought to regulate human actions, the former, having the same concernment, seeks in addition to derive those laws from the essence of Christianity (*aus dem Wesen des Christenthums*).

But Wuttke, one of the most deservedly distinguished ethicists of modern times, puts the case of the true system of Christian ethics at once aptly, eloquently, and concisely. 'Theologico-Christian morals presuppose,' he says, 'in contradistinction from philosophical ethics, a history—to wit, the redemption accomplished by Christ. But redemption presupposes

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Handb. der christl. Sittenlehre*, Einleitung, § 1.

<sup>2</sup> 'Die Darstellung der durch die Gemeinschaft mit Christo, dem Erlöser, bedingten Gemeinschaft mit Gott, sofern dieselbe das Motiv aller Handlungen des Christen ist, oder die Beschreibung derjenigen Handlungsweise, welche aus der Herrschaft des christlich bestimmten Selbstbewusstseins entsteht.'—*Christl. Sitte*, S. 32, 33.

sin; . . . and sin presupposes the idea of morality (die sittliche Idee) *per se*, of which it is the actual negation. The knowledge of the Christian ethics reposing upon the completed redemption, thus presupposes the knowledge of the condition of the yet unredeemed, and this again the knowledge of that ideal existence from which mankind in its sin has turned away.

‘Christian ethics has thus to take under its cognizance three things:—

‘1. The moral *per se*, without reference to sin,—the moral in its ideal form,—that primordial morality which God, as the Holy, wills and desires.

‘2. The lapse from the purely moral,—sin,—the culpable reversal of the moral idea (*Idee*) in actuality,—that which man, as the unholy, wills and desires.

‘3. The moral in its renovation through redemption,—the regeneration of moral truth out of sinful corruption,—that which God as gracious, and man as contrite, [alike] will and desire.

‘These three forms of morality originated for man not simultaneously, but consecutively, and image forth a moral history of mankind. The first stage is pre-historic; the second is the essence of the history of man up to the time of Christ; and the third is the essence of that history, which emanates from Christ and is enacted by those who appertain to Him<sup>1</sup>.’

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Christl. Sittenlehre*, vol. i., *Einleitung*, iv. § 50, pp. 300–301.

## CHAPTER III.

### PROVINCE AND GENERAL CONTENTS OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS DETERMINED.

HAVING in the preceding chapter considered the preliminary question of the definition of moral science, both as apart from and in relation to Christianity, it becomes our duty in the next place to determine more specifically its *province and contents*.

Now, we have seen that morals, treated in its isolation from the Christian system, is that science which is concerned with the development of the laws of human conduct. But when we speak of 'laws for human conduct,'—the conduct of man, that is, both inner and outer, subjective and objective,—we employ a term which admits of widely different interpretations, and which, as so variously interpreted, places the entire science of morality upon entirely different bases. It is therefore absolutely necessary to attach an intelligible and precise meaning to the term 'law' at the very outset of our inquiry. What, then, are we to understand when we speak of laws of conduct?

It is a notorious fact, that even by the best writers the most inextricable and barbarous confusion has been imported into the discussion of both ethical and religious problems by an employment of the term 'law' or

‘laws’ with a sense at once vague, obscure, and incoherent. Thus Paley first includes what he is pleased to term ‘the *law* of honour’ within the province of moral philosophy, and then proceeds to define ‘the law of honour’ as ‘a system of rules constructed by people of fashion, and calculated to facilitate their intercourse with one another; and for no other purpose’—a definition which, by its very terms, proves that the law of honour is no law at all in any proper sense of the term. In like manner it is customary to speak of the *laws* of art, *laws* of matter, *laws* regulative of the growth of animal and vegetable organisms, *laws* of motion, and *laws* of nature. But none of these are laws proper; but are only laws metaphorical or figurative, that is, uniformities which, from their nearer or remoter analogy to the uniformities established by laws true and proper, are by a licence of language designated laws. They are laws, in brief, only by a figure of speech; or are, in other words, not laws at all. Thus Ulpian defines natural law, *jus naturale*, as ‘quod natura omnia animalia docuit’—‘that which nature teaches to all animals<sup>1</sup>’; by which he means to designate those animal instincts common to man with the brute. But these instincts are related to laws only by very slender and remote analogy, and ought not by a grave writer on jurisprudence to have been confounded therewith. Montesquieu falls into a similar confusion and bewilderment of thought when he says in the opening sentence of his ‘Spirit of Laws:’—‘The laws, in the most extended signification, are the necessary relations which are derived from the nature of things; and in

<sup>1</sup> Institutionum Justiniani, Lib. I. tit. ii.

this sense all beings have their laws. God has His laws; the material world has its laws; the intelligences superior to man have their laws; the beasts have their laws; man has his laws<sup>1</sup>. Comte has evidently but one idea of law, and that an erroneous one, vitiating as it does his speculations of morality and religion. He defines laws as 'relations constant in the midst of an immense diversity<sup>2</sup>.' Hence, upon this misconception he lays down, with no little assumption of superior wisdom, as 'the fundamental principle of positive dogma, the subjection of all phenomena whatsoever to invariable relations<sup>3</sup>.' In precisely the same sense, Stuart Mill applies the term to the uniformities of the course of nature. Each of these separate uniformities, he says, if it be not a case of and result from others, is a law of nature<sup>4</sup>.

But not unnecessarily to multiply instances, it must be evident from those already cited, that, to import any such meaning of the term 'law' into the discussion of juridical and ethical subjects, must have the inevitable effect of involving the subjects so discussed in the profoundest perplexity and the most inextricable entanglement and confusion. Out of this notion of law, when applied to morals, has arisen no doubt the atheistic pretence of a natural morality—natural, that

<sup>1</sup> 'Les lois, dans la signification la plus étendue, sont les rapports nécessaires qui dérivent de la nature des choses; et dans ce sens tous les êtres ont leurs lois: la Divinité a ses lois; le monde matériel a ses lois; les intelligences supérieures à l'homme ont leurs lois; les bêtes ont leurs lois; l'homme a ses lois.'—Montesquieu, *Esprit du Lois*.

<sup>2</sup> Comte, *Cat. Positiviste*, Pt. I. p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Compare Mill's *System of Logic*, Bk. III. ch. iv.

is, as being absolutely independent as to its derivation of the ideas either of God or of revelation.

But, as we shall see, this notion of a law of morality is utterly absurd and untenable: since law, in the provinces of morals and jurisprudence, if it mean anything at all, means much more than a 'constant relation,'—an established uniformity among ethical and juridical phenomena.

What, then, is law in the proper acceptance of the term?

'Every *law* or *rule* (taken with the largest signification which can be given to the term *properly*) is a *command*. Or rather, laws or rules, properly so called, are a *species* of command<sup>1</sup>.'

Here, since 'laws are a species of commands,' it is manifest that the latter term comprises the former, and 'is the simpler as well as the larger of the two.' 'But,' as Austin remarks, 'simple as it is, it admits of explanation. And, since it is the key to the sciences of jurisprudence and morals, its meaning should be analysed with precision.'

Now Austin gives, as the results of his analysis of the signification of this term, three elements. 'It appears,' he writes, 'that the ideas or notions comprehended by the term command are the following. (1) A wish or desire conceived by a rational being, that another rational being shall do or forbear. (2) An evil to proceed from the former, and to be incurred by the latter, in case the latter comply not with the wish. (3) An expression or intimation of the wish by words or other signs<sup>2</sup>.' But it appears, upon a further analysis

<sup>1</sup> Austin's *Province of Jurisprudence Determined*, vol. i. p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 7.



of the second of these three results, that every command implies, as a fundamental condition, the ability of the commanded party to do or forbear as he is wished or not, at his own option. Apart indeed from this fourth consideration, the second of Austin's results could have no possible meaning; for how could the commanding party intend to inflict an evil upon the commanded party in case of non-compliance with the wish or desire of the former, if such commanded party was not possessed of power either of compliance or non-compliance. Thus, for example, no one would think of commanding an untutored savage, while in his savage state, to calculate an eclipse, or manipulate a difficult chemical analysis, and that too with the deliberate intention of inflicting an evil upon him in case of his failing to comply with such behest.

Manifestly, therefore, every command comprehends *four* rather than three elements. Such at least is the opinion of Barbeyraccius.

1. The projection of a wish upon the part of a superior to an inferior.
2. The signification of such wish by words or signs.
3. The arming of the wish by sanctions (i. e. by an evil to be incurred in case of disobedience).
4. The power to obey or disobey the wish contemplated by such sanctions.

Here, accordingly, if we keep *prominently* in view the first and second elements, the conception and publication of a wish, we have what constitutes the common notion of a *command*, although it really includes in the background the other two conceptions.

If, however, we keep *prominently* in view the third element, relegating the remainder to a subordinate

location, we speak of being *obliged* to comply with the wish expressed.

Keeping, however, prominently in view the last of these elements, we speak of our being free to comply or not comply as we please.

Or, finally, if we confine our attention to the mere evil to be incurred by disobedience, we speak of the command as having been armed with a sanction.

There are here, then, four concepts expressed by the terms 'command' (in its popular acceptation), 'obligation,' 'sanction,' and 'freedom of will,' all in strict and essential correlation. They are but parts of one complex notion. In the language of logic, each of the four notions *signifies* the same notion, denotes a different part of that notion, and connotes the residue.

But it has been said the 'laws are a species of commands.' All laws are commands; but it cannot be said conversely that all commands are laws. 'Commands,' says Austin, 'are of two species. Some are laws or rules. The others have not acquired an appropriate name, nor does language afford an expression which will mark them briefly and precisely. I must therefore note them, as well as I can, by the ambiguous and inexpressive name of "*occasional* or *particular* commands."' The term *laws* or *rules* being not unfrequently applied to occasional or particular commands, it is hardly possible to describe a line of separation which shall consist in every respect with established forms of speech. But the distinction between laws and particular commands may, I think, be stated in the following manner.

'By every command, the party to whom it is directed is obliged to do or to forbear.

‘Now where it obliges *generally* to acts or forbearances of a *class*, a command is a law or rule. But where it obliges to a *specific* act or forbearance, or to acts or forbearances which it determines specifically or individually, a command is occasional or particular<sup>1</sup>.’

A law then is a command enjoining us to do or forbear *generally* from acts of a *class*. And with this tallies the signification of *jus*, the term employed by the Roman jurists to denote a *right*. ‘The word *jus*,’ writes Ortolan, ‘the Romans have deduced from the positive fact of a commandment,—an order, by which the necessity of action or of inaction is imposed upon us. *Jus* is only a word derived by contraction from *jussum*. The original signification of this word is, therefore, *order*, or *rule generally prescribed*, that is to say, *law formulated by power*<sup>2</sup>.’ Agreeably with this, Pufendorf defines law as, ‘Norma illa . . . quæ est decretum, quo superior sibi subjectum obligat ut ad istius præscriptum actiones suas componat<sup>3</sup>.’ He then proceeds to remark that, ‘to every perfect law there are two parts: one, by which is defined what must be done or omitted; the other, by which is indicated what evil must be inflicted upon him who fails of that which is enjoined, and does that which is forbidden. . . . Thus, therefore, all the force of law consists in the signification of that which a superior wishes or does not wish to be done by us, as also of the penalties to be instituted against the violators of law<sup>4</sup>.’

<sup>1</sup> Province of Jurisprudence Determined; vol. i. pp. 10, 11. Second edit. London, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Explication Historique des Instituts, vol. ii. pp. 17, 18. Septième édition. Paris, 1863.

<sup>3</sup> De Officio Hominis et Civis, Lib. I. c. ii. § 2.      <sup>4</sup> Ibid. § 7.

Here, as is manifest at a glance, are Austin's three elements of a command,—the only difference being, that Pufendorf includes Austin's first and second elements under his first part or heading (that, to wit, by which what is to be done or omitted is defined), which he calls *præceptum*, as distinguished from his second 'part of every perfect law,' which sets forth the evil to be inflicted on the disobedient, and which he terms the *commination* (*comminatio*). The *precept* (*præceptum*) of Pufendorf clearly includes, *first*, a wish conceived by a rational being that another rational being shall do or forbear; and *secondly*, the expression or signification of such wish by words or signs. And if so, then in Pufendorf we have disguised under two headings the three essential elemental constituents of every command, rule, or law.

Spinoza speaks of law as being either by necessity of nature, or as dependent upon the pleasure of man, and so gets, as he confusedly thinks, two species of law. He admits, however, that the latter is more properly denominated *jus*. He next, after a futile endeavour to reconcile human freedom with the pantheistic determinism of his system, proceeds to define the law which exists by the placitum of man, as 'ratio vivendi, quæ hominibus ex aliorum imperio præscribitur,' or 'that way of life which is prescribed to men by the *command* (*imperio*) of others<sup>1</sup>.' 'Law,' writes Kant, '(a moral practical law) is a proposition, which comprehends a categorical imperative (command)<sup>2</sup>.'

<sup>1</sup> Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, cap. iv., Opera omnia, ed. C. Bruder, Ph. D., vol. iii. pp. 62-63. Leipsiæ, 1846.

<sup>2</sup> Rechtslehre, Einleitung in die Metaphysik der Sitten, § iv.; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. ix. p. 29.

Christian von Wolff defines law as 'a rule, according to which we are bound to order our free actions;' and 'duty is thus an action, which is agreeable to the law.' Wolff further divides law into the law of nature, Divine law, and human law; the law of nature, from the circumstance that our nature is due for its existence to the creative will of God, being regarded by Wolff as a species of Divine law, an expression of the Divine will. All law is thus resolved by Wolff into two groups, the law of God, and the law of man<sup>1</sup>.

Law then is, we repeat, a command (*Gebot*, or, as Kant expresses it, 'a categorical imperative') enjoining us to do or forbear generally from acts of a class. In jurisprudence and ethics this is the only proper signification of the term, and its employment in any other sense is misleading and pernicious.

But although this is its only true and proper meaning, yet in order to an accurate appreciation of the precise signification of moral law, it will be necessary to speak of those specific characteristics which distinguish it from other kinds of law.

Let it be carefully and anxiously kept in view then that all laws are commands. But all laws are not just. All laws do not enjoin or command what is right. Human laws—laws by pure human position—are not always righteous or wise, but are frequently the very reverse. But that circumstance in no way affects their legal character. They are laws in spite of their justice or injustice, their wisdom or their folly; and the science conversant with positive law, irrespective of its being worthy or unworthy of approbation, is that of jurisprudence.

<sup>1</sup> Compare Wuttke's *Sittenlehre*, vol. i. p. 233.

But here there exists a sharp line of separation between jurisprudence, as just described, and morals. For to all moral law it is essential that it should command only what is *right*. We saw in the definition of Pufendorf that law itself might be termed a *norm* (norma), because it is like the carpenter's rule, a standard unit, by means of which we may measure our conduct. But while in jurisprudence this legal norm may be arbitrarily selected by the legislator, in morals the law itself as a norm of conduct is not thus arbitrarily appointed, but must itself in turn conform to a yet higher norma or standard-measure, that, namely, of eternal and immutable *right*. All moral law, therefore, is law as it *ought* to be, is law conformed to *right*. Moral law is in fact but *right formulated by adequate authority*.

Right, therefore, is the ultimate, primordial, eternal norm standard, or canon with which in the last resort all the thoughts, motives, actions, and relations of responsible beings are compared, and which, according to their agreement or disagreement therewith, are in common speech termed *right* thoughts, motives, actions, and relations, or *wrong* thoughts, motives, actions, and relations.

Hence arise the chief problems of ethical science. The entities termed respectively *law*, *obligation*, *sanction*, *liberty*, are, as we have already seen, correlative and co-existent. Law implies obligation, and obligation implies freedom. Moral law in like manner implies moral obligations and moral sanctions; and moral obligation implies the freedom of the will. And all these in their turn repose upon the fundamental dis-

inction between right and wrong, virtue and vice, good and evil.

We have then to ask and answer the following questions:—

1. What is *right*? or what is the basis of moral law? and what are its provisions as a directorium of objective morality or morality *per se*, or morality in relation to the moral ruler?

2. What is *virtue*? or what is that law as obligatory upon us, and as a directorium of subjective morality, or morality in relation to the moral subject?

3. What is *good* or happiness? or what are the sanctions of morality? what, in brief, is morality in relation to its consequences?

We must, in other words, *first*, determine the theory of rectitude speculatively, and determine its criterion and application practically. We must, *secondly*, determine the theory of virtue speculatively, together with its implicates, free-will and moral obligation, and also its criterion and application practically. We must, in the *third* instance, determine the theory of happiness speculatively, and then its criterion and application practically. This scheme, further evolved, would stand thus:—

#### I. THEORY OF RECTITUDE OR RIGHT.

1. Discussion of the foundation of right.
2. Criterion of what is right.
3. Scheme of practical duties or *external* obligations.

#### II. THEORY OF VIRTUE.

1. Discussion of the foundation of moral obligation.

2. Criterion of virtue.
3. Scheme of virtuous motives or *internal* obligations.

### III. THEORY OF HAPPINESS.

1. Discussion of nature of the *summum bonum*.
2. Criterion of happiness.
3. Scheme of sanctions, or of external and internal rewards and punishments.

The author of the article entitled 'Moral Philosophy' in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* adopts a similar, but much less coherent and logical division of the science than that above given. He separates moral philosophy into four branches: viz. (1) The theory of rectitude in actions; (2) The theory of virtue in individuals; (3) The scheme of practical duties; (4) The doctrine of happiness. Here 'the scheme of practical duties' seems rather to have been inserted to save the deficiencies of the division than to have arisen, as it ought to have arisen, out of the division itself. Then the real distinction between interior and exterior duties has been overlooked, and there is no place found for a scheme of motives (*officia virtutis*), or duties, that is to say, of inner life.

The writer in the *Encyclopædia* (Dr. Alexander, I believe) has, nevertheless, come much nearer to an appreciation of the requirements of moral science than most English moralists. Dr. Wardlaw, in his *Systematic Theology*, has been content to follow, in his exposition of the morality of the Old and New Testaments, the order of the Decalogue, which, while highly valuable as a convenient compendium of the chief points of practical morality, neither has, nor makes



any pretension to have, any merits as an exhaustive scientific division of the contents of ethical philosophy. Many moralists have been satisfied with the arrangement of all morality into duties towards God, duties towards man, and duties towards one's-self. And this is the division adopted by Pufendorf, an admirable and careful thinker<sup>1</sup>. Paley, thinking no doubt to improve upon this, has adopted a much more confused, though a somewhat more comprehensive arrangement. In six books he discusses all that he considers to pertain to moral and political philosophy. His first book contains only preliminary matter, although, singular to say, he discusses the nature of virtue and happiness. In his second book he discusses the nature of moral obligation, and incongruously includes under this head a consideration of and division of rights. The remaining three books (the sixth being devoted to the treatment of political philosophy) are concerned entirely with duties. Thus nearly the whole of Paley's moral philosophy is concerned with *duties*, that is, objective or exterior obligations. These he divides, much the same as Pufendorf, into relative duties, duties towards ourselves, and duties towards God. *Relative* duties, as he terms them (as if there were any duties which are not *relative*), he subdivides into—(1) Relative duties which are determinate (concerning property, contracts, oaths, &c.); (2) Relative duties which are indeterminate (concerning charity, slavery, resentment, duelling, litigation, gratitude, slander); (3) Relative duties which result from the constitution of the sexes (marriage, duties of parents, duties of children, &c.). In the sixth

<sup>1</sup> De Officio Hominiſ et Civis, Lib. I. cap. iii. § 13, p. 184.

book man's political duties are treated most unphilosophically, as coming under none of the above divisions—not even under relative duties—but as wholly apart and by itself. Anything more hopelessly confused could not well be conceived than the disposition, made by Paley, of the materials presented by moral science. Its errors of omission are, moreover, equally glaring with its errors of commission; and this objection must apply to all those systems which make morality almost exclusively conversant with *duties*. For even practical morality comprehends, when rightly considered, much more than a mere scheme of obligations. To revert to the *threefold* division given on p. 276, it must be here observed that it can only be said to moot the chief problems of ethical science, since it certainly does by no means exhaust the materials with which such science ought to become versant. Much less does it embrace all the topics which would properly come within the province of a science of Christian morals.

Faulty, however, as it unquestionably is, it is nevertheless substantially the same in outline, although differing as to detail, with that division of morals into three parts which respectively treat of the chief good, of virtue, and of duty (Güter-, Tugend- und Pflichtenlehre), so customarily employed by many German philosophers.

This is, in fact, the division adopted by Schleiermacher in his speculative ethics. Feeling, as he did, that man in his present estate is out of harmony with the physical creation, he considered true morality to consist in that action of man's reason upon nature by which this harsh disagreement between man's spiritual mission, and the physical conditions under which he is

called to effect that mission, is as far as possible subdued and minimized. He regarded the operation of reason upon nature as tending to the subjugation and subordination of the material creation to the control of man, by means of which such physical creation is being utilized for spiritual purposes; and life, which without such effort would have been embruted and sottish, thus becomes morally and spiritually beatified, transfigured, idealized, and transubstantiated into a higher, holier, and heavenlier kind of life. Thus this harmony between man and nature existed in the primitive age,—the golden age of poesy, when all was peaceful and paradisal, and when man had undisputed dominion over nature, over the beasts of the field, over the fowls of the air, and over the fishes of the sea, and over whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea. This unity of man with nature it is which is contemplated as of future possible realization, when we think of a life to come of everlasting joy and dominion, in which man is to realize the perfection of knowledge and of holiness, and in which, above all, he is to enjoy free and perfect communion with the highest consciousness, by means, be it carefully observed, of self-representation, or by means, in other words, of the setting forth, the exhibition, upon the part of man, of the inherent potentialities of his own spiritual being. Taking this reciprocity (*Inandersein*), this harmony, this unison of man with nature, as the perfection of morality, Schleiermacher considers that it may be contemplated under three aspects. Observe, they are but aspects of one and the same thing.

1. The unity of reason with nature may be considered in its anticipated ultimate and actual accom-

plishment. The moral struggle may be viewed in the light of its final issue (Endpunkt), such issue being regarded as *the highest good*. Similarly, all the individual approximations and manifestations of the harmonic unity of man with nature admit also of treatment as being, in their degree, so many manifestations of *the good*. Hence his doctrine concerning the chief good (Güterlehre).

2. The unity of reason with nature may be considered, not merely with reference to its issue, or ultimate accomplishment, but also with reference to the initiation or commencing-point (Anfangspunkt) of the unifying process. Thus the power or force which, in the first instance, imparts, by its impulse, to the human soul a tendency to seek the attainment of morality—the attainment, that is to say, of oneness with nature—is *virtue*. Hence his doctrine concerning virtue (Tugendlehre).

3. The direction taken up by virtue—the mode of action pursued by it, in order to the attainment of the chief good—constitutes *duty*. It is the mode of progression of the causality or motive-force of reason (virtue) towards the realization of the issue contemplated by the moral struggle of life. Hence his doctrine concerning duty (Pflichtenlehre)<sup>1</sup>.

Schleiermacher thus adopts, with a meaning certainly of his own, the tripartite division of morals in question.

This is also the arrangement adopted by Rothe in

<sup>1</sup> Entwurf der Systems der Sitten, Allgemeine Einleitung, iv. §§ 110–122; Sämmtliche Werke, Abtheil. iii. Band v. pp. 74–84. Cf. Wuttke, Handbuch der christl. Sittenlehre, Band i. SS. 289, 290.

his Theological Ethics<sup>1</sup>, in which, starting with Schleiermacher's fundamental principle, he also exhibits some of the characteristics of the philosophical systems of Hegel and Schelling.

Like Schleiermacher, he holds that the true concept of morality is—'the actual unity of personality with material nature as accomplished by the former in virtue of its function determining it upon the latter, or the unity of personality with the material constitution considered as the being appropriated of the latter by and into the former<sup>2</sup>.'

1. By the good, he means moral perfection as the product of moral action—morality as an attainment complete in all its parts, or the state of man when in entire harmony with nature. This harmony constitutes the chief good. This he contemplates first in its ideal perfection, apart from all consideration of sin, and secondly, in its state of becoming or in its concrete actualizations. Hence his doctrine concerning the chief good (*Güterlehre*).

2. By virtue, he understands the causality or force in man which produces the chief good. This he regards as a purely subjective and causative principle in human nature, which, from humble beginnings, struggles upward against all opposing obstacles until it has gained complete dominance and supremacy. Then, and not until then, has it effected the produc-

<sup>1</sup> Theologische Ethik, 3. Bd. 1845-1849.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Band i. S. 188. 'Die wirkliche Einheit der Persönlichkeit und der materiellen Natur als durch jene selbst vermöge ihrer sie bestimmenden Function auf diese gesetzte, oder die Einheit der Persönlichkeit und der materiellen Natur als zugeeignetsein dieser an jene.'

tion of the chief good. It is, in fact, in the nature of virtue, as a force in human nature, to bring both the body and the external world under the control of the person in whom it resides. The consideration, then, of virtue as the power which produces the chief good, furnishes Rothe with his doctrine of virtue (Tugendlehre).

3. By obligation or duty, he intends what is termed the formula of this causality or force of reason. For, since this causality of the human reason—otherwise termed virtue—is self-determinative, so a definite formula for the production of the chief good is necessary; in other words, a moral law is necessary, by means of which, upon the side of the producing power, the actual production of the moral world is conditioned. This constitutes his doctrine concerning duty (Pflichtenlehre).

Of the division of moral science by Schleiermacher and Rothe, it may be here remarked, that the fundamental thought in both is that of the operation of reason upon nature, in which morality is said to consist. The end sought by this action of the one upon the other, namely, the actual oneness and harmony of reason with the physical creation, is *the highest good*. The force of reason producing this good is *virtue*. The modes of procedure taken up in order to its production—the directions pursued by the activity of reason upon nature with the object of producing that highest good—constitute *duty*.

Such notions of *good*, *virtue*, and *duty* are of course wholly alien from the genius of Christianity, while the method employed for their evolution is equally unsuited to the requirements of a science of Christian ethics.

It might be supposed at first sight that the term *duty*, as employed by Schleiermacher, connoted of necessity the notion of *law*. But this is certainly not the case. A radical defect of Schleiermacher's ethics is, that it took no cognizance of the existence of the objective, Divine law. He, indeed, adopted the good rather than the right, as the measure of virtue. He supposed that virtue was perfectly free and spontaneous, not in any wise coercive; and he considered that the pursuit of good, because one delights in it, was a higher moral act than obedience to a law as an authoritative rule. But duty, which includes within it no principle of obligation in view of a recognised norm, standard, or law, is no *duty* at all. As Kant has well said, 'a law must lie at the basis of every duty<sup>1</sup>.' Consequently, that portion of Schleiermacher's ethics (reference being here made not to his Christian but to his speculative or philosophical ethics) which treats of duties (*Pflichtenlehre*) is a mere moral figment, a delusion and a pretence, since it treats of *duties* in no true and proper sense of that designation.

That the three-fold disposition of the contents of moral science, above referred to, is utterly objectionable, will further appear when we attempt to determine the precise relationship in which ethics stands to other departments of inquiry.

'As a philosophical science,' remarks Wuttke, 'morals is a part of the philosophy of the spirit, and presupposes speculative theology and psychology, and stands in the closest relationship to the science of history considered

<sup>1</sup> *Tugendlehre*, Einleit. xviii., *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. ix., ed. Rosenkranz, p. 259.

as the objective actualization of the moral life.' Thus 'ethics is psychology, in as far as it sets forth directly the highest form of the soul's life: it is history, in as far as it contemplates man, not as an isolated being, but as an organic member of the whole<sup>1</sup>.' The relation of morals to history has been admirably put by Schleiermacher. 'The science of history is,' he writes, 'the picture-book of the science of morals, and the science of morals is the formula-book of the science of history<sup>2</sup>.'

Hence, out of this intimate connection between morals and history, there arises as a constituent part of a comprehensive science of the former, a scientific treatment of history contemplated as morals in its actualization. Such a treatment of history is, it need hardly be remarked, unknown to the literature of this country, important as it unquestionably is to the thorough mastery of the domain of ethical phenomena. Neander has stated the principles which are to determine such a science; but our limits forbid our taking any further notice of them in this place, save as we may here cite his lucid and eloquent remarks on the interdependency of ethics and history. 'Morals,' he says, 'stands in especial relation to history. . . . It brings us to a consciousness of the laws which govern the course of history; it is the consciousness of history scientifically determined: and history in turn conserves the living intuition of the moral idea (*Idee*) which moral science develops. What Schleiermacher cor-

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Handb. der christl. Sittenlehre*, Einleit. Bd. i. § 2, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *System der Sittenlehre*, p. 68. 'Die Geschichtskunde ist das Bilderbuch der Sittenlehre, und die Sittenlehre ist das Formelbuch der Geschichtskunde.'



rectly says in the general concerning the relation between philosophical morals and the science of history, holds good in especial reference to the relation of Christian moral science to the history of the Church. The scientific treatment of Christian morals yielding the laws for the contemplation of the process of the development of the Christian life, allows us to judge what is accomplished, and brings us to a consciousness of the exercises yet to be fulfilled. Church history gives us the living intuition of the laws of Christian morals; it shows us the Christian life in its progressive actualization, in its healthy development, as also in its abnormal evolutions<sup>1</sup>.

To recur, from this brief digression, we may remind ourselves once more of the actual relationship in which, as we saw, ethical science stands to other departments of inquiry. Ethics does not absolutely exclude from its domain either theology, history, or psychology. But neither must it be confounded with those sciences.

Now, first, as to its connection with theology. There are parts of theology which, under a practical aspect, constitute equally parts of ethics; and this is true, be it most carefully observed, of ethics in any proper sense of the term. Wuttke goes so far as to say that moral science is a part of systematic theology, and that it stands, as such, in the closest connection with dogmatics. And if our concernment is with what alone represents morality in its entirety and its symmetry, namely, the science of *Christian* morals,

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte der christl. Ethik, herausg. von Gen.-Superintend. Dr. Erdmann; Einleit. § iv. pp. 10, 11. Berlin, 1869.

then we may affirm, without fear of contradiction, that the principles of Christian belief are fundamental to a complete scheme of obligations. As Neander has said, 'Die christliche Sittenlehre ist ja die andere Seite der Glaubenslehre, sie ist die angewandte Glaubenslehre'—'Christian moral science is indeed the other side of dogmatics; it is applied dogmatics<sup>1</sup>.' Dogma is, in brief, fundamental to duty, faith to morals, and Christian faith to Christian morals.

All therefore that is necessary to the constitution of a sound dogmatic basis for morality, though the materials for such basis may be derived from theological science, is nevertheless an indisputable part of moral science. All beliefs, all doctrines, which can or ought to influence man in the discharge of his duties, are parts of morality; nay, the very duties themselves are, without such beliefs and doctrines, neither accurately conceived nor truly discharged.

It is not our duty to indicate what dogmas are, or are not, essential to moral science. Some are manifestly more so than others. But it is of vital importance to the cause of true religion that they should be indicated, and that in a worthy and scientific manner. Here is admirable work in store for a Christian Moral Science Association. It is a work as yet unaccomplished. Desultory and unsystematic indications have indeed been given of a connection between dogma and duty, faith and praxis; but not that scientific treatment of the entire line of inquiry here suggested, which, if properly effected, would do incalculable service to religion, as against the two prevalent forms of neology and unbelief.

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte der christl. Ethik, p. 11.

But, secondly, with regard to the relation between ethics and psychology. Ethics is not, as Kant's speculations tended to make it, a mere department of psychology; neither is all psychology ethical. Upon the contrary, the two sciences, while having investigations in common, do in reality exclude each other, occupying provinces and contemplating ends distinct the one from the other. In its largest sense, psychology is what the Germans call *Seelenlehre*, soul-learning, or the philosophy of the spirit. Now taken in this its largest and truest meaning, it is manifest that in one department of this soul-learning, that, namely, which is limited to the consideration of the moral nature of man (the will, the emotions, the moral consciousness, the conscience, &c.), ethics and psychology have common ground. Kant and many German ethicists speak of the reason (*Vernunft*), not only as being that within us which *perceives*, which he calls *the pure reason* (*die reine Vernunft*), but also as that within us which *wills*, which in turn he calls *the practical reason* (*die praktische Vernunft*). Now is this so? as, if it is not so, the assumption that it is, is manifestly highly prejudicial to ethical inquiry. The utilitarian and eudæmonistic systems of morality continually refer our conception of right to the intellectual part of our nature. But is not this assumption wholly unwarranted? Is it not another part of our nature which furnishes to us all our directly and exclusively moral ideas? Are not those ideas—so termed for want of a more accurate psychological terminology—more nearly allied, like our ideas of the beautiful, to feelings, than to the definitive cognitions of the intellect? These are questions not as yet fully answered. There is ample scope for

further systematic inquiry in the field of what, for distinction's sake, may be termed moral psychology; nor would such inquiry be void of the most important practical consequences. Might not an inductive examination of all those portions of Holy Writ (referring apparently to a portion of our nature distinct from the intellect or rational portion thereof) materially help to a solution of the problem?

Suffice it to say, however, that ethical science is entitled to claim as its own so much of psychology as has any actual bearing, theoretical or practical, on the questions with which it is concerned. But beyond this point the two sciences are essentially independent and distinct.

But there is another department of knowledge with which ethics has, and may yet have, important relations. Man is body as well as soul; and there may be, not only physical conditions of thought, but also physical states conditioning individual moral character. Psychology is, in brief, but itself a department of a yet wider study of man—man considered not merely as spirit, but as body and spirit in organic union. Schleiermacher was not slow to perceive that the chasm between ethics and physics was to some extent bridged over by what he terms the intermediate science of anthropology. Kant, in like manner, recognises the connection between ethics and anthropology. The former he terms rational ethics or morals proper, and the latter empirical ethics. 'All philosophy,' he writes, 'is divisible into empirical and pure philosophy; *empirical*, in as far as it fixes itself upon the basis of experience *pure*, that which propounds its doctrines from principles *à priori*. The latter, when purely

formal, is named Logic; but if it is limited to definite objects of the understanding, it is called Metaphysics. Thus there originates the idea of a twofold metaphysics—a metaphysics of nature, and a metaphysics of morals. Physics will have not only its empirical, but also its rational part. Similarly of ethics, although here the empirical department may be especially denominated practical anthropology, the rational department, however, morals proper<sup>1</sup>.

We may lay it down, therefore, that whatever importance, greater or less, may attach to the relations existing between anthropology—a science as yet in a very inchoate condition—and ethics, a science of Christian morals neither has, nor can have, any interest in ignoring those relations. Upon the contrary, it will recognise them as they may, in the progress of discovery, be brought to light. Christianity has ever been foremost in her philanthropic recognition of the fact that men have bodies as well as souls; and she has nothing to fear from the physiological discoveries which may be made tending to show, not indeed, as some with crooked logic have supposed, that man has no soul at all, but that, in the infinite wisdom of the Creator, his physical organization, his body, is admirably and deftly adapted as much in view of the psychological processes of his inner life of thought as of the mechanical processes of his outer life of action.

Christian moral science will, in brief, methodize and exhaust all the facts which can be truthfully said to constitute constituent elements of man's moral con-

<sup>1</sup> Kant's *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, Vorrede, S. 4; *Sämmtliche Werke*, Bd. viii.

dition. Whatever directly concerns man's moral condition and responsibilities, claims, as such, its place and due subordination in an honest and exhaustive development of the science of Christian ethics.

Ethics thus stands related to anthropology, to psychology, and to history upon the one hand; and upon the other to theology, to redemption, and to the doctrine of the last things, or eschatology.

And here it is manifest that the distinction is totally untenable which is commonly made between the physical and moral sciences. It is usual to say that the concernment of the former is with what *has been, is, or will be*, while that of the latter is with what *ought to be*. 'The *quid est*,' writes Dr. Chalmers, 'is not to be confounded with *quid oportet*<sup>1</sup>.' But morals is not a mere art. It is a science; and has a firm basis in facts—facts more imperishable and momentous than any with which the physical and natural sciences are versant. The science of morals as related to theology, christology, anthropology, psychology, and history, must contemplate a multitude of facts, such as law, abstract right, virtue, sin, freedom, obligation, responsibility, punishment. As well might the physiologist neglect the circulation of the blood, or the astronomer the force of gravitation, as that the moralist should neglect, as many moralists have neglected, the scientific treatment of these fundamental considerations, conditioning, as they do, the very existence of the science with which the latter are supposed to be especially versant.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Chalmers' Moral Philosophy, ch. i.; Works, vol. v. p. 15. Compare Mill's Logic, Bk. VI. ch. xi., and the Encycl. Brit. vol. xv. eighth edition, art. 'Moral Philosophy.'

In view of these facts the general province of Christian moral science has been admirably indicated by the lucid and excellent Wuttke<sup>1</sup>. As we saw in the concluding portion of our last chapter, Christian ethics must take under its cognizance—

1. Morality in its original purity, or *per se*—morality as it must have been prior to the Fall;
2. Morality in its perversion by sin—the effects of transgression upon the moral life; and
3. Morality in its renovation through redemption.

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, Handbuch der christ. Sittenlehre, Bd. i., Einleitung, iv. § 50, S. 300.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE IMPLICATES OF MORAL LAW.

WHEN speaking in our third chapter of the precise signification of the term 'law,'—a term which is, as Austin correctly remarks, 'the key to the sciences of jurisprudence and morals,'—we found it inconvenient to discuss in that place a matter of equal moment, namely, *the implicates of moral law*. The importance of this study cannot be over-estimated by those whose concern it is to convince the unbeliever, who, despite his unbelief, clings to some notion of a self-evolved, natural morality; for, in dealing with the atheist and the pantheist, it is of essential importance not to assume more than each is prepared to admit. To affirm that morality is no morality except as it is Christianized—transfused by the spirit of the Gospel—may be all very well if the controversy is with one who already acknowledges the being of a God and the Divine authenticity and authority of the Christian Faith. But, if it is thought that avowed atheists and pantheists will be convinced by a course of reasoning which assumes what they do not believe, in order thence to disprove what they do believe, a great and fatal tactical error is committed. No: unbelievers must be taken upon their own elect ground; and, that being



done, they must be led to see that out of the little they do believe there arises an imperative demand that, in order to the truly and worthily believing even of that little, they should perfect it by annexing to it those other additional truths which stand in necessary and essential correlation therewith.

Now, the atheists and pantheists of this day allow the existence of such a thing as morality; for how could they well deny it? They even speak of moral laws, of obligation, of rights, of duties. Nay, they attempt the construction of schemes of morality and even of religion (yes, religion!) on independent grounds. It is said that right is right, and wrong is wrong, whether there be a God or no; and that, in fact, the moral qualities of acts are in no way affected by either belief or non-belief in His existence. The atheist scouts the idea that morality is in any way dependent upon the existence of God, and persists in speaking of it as in absolute and unqualified isolation from all theological thought whatsoever. But it is no small concession that the materialist and pantheist will admit the existence of morality. And it is of not a little importance that, by evolving the implicates of moral law, the atheist should be shown that he must either abandon his atheism upon the one hand, or his morality upon the other.

Now, we saw in our last chapter, that all laws were commands enjoining us to do or forbear generally from acts of a class; and that to employ the term in any other sense is to employ it improperly or by an analogical, figurative, or metaphorical extension of its proper signification. Certainly Bentham did the utmost service to science when he asserted for this name its

plain, precise and proper signification. He little wotted, however, that he was at the same time doing equal service to the cause of religion. Religion is, in fact, always the gainer by plain speaking and clear thinking; and nothing is more productive of heterodoxy and infidelity than the confused and improper employment of scientific terms.

To recur from this brief digression, we remark that to all *law*, as thus defined, there appertain of necessity two factors — the commanding personal unit and the commanded personal unit, the superior and the inferior, the lawgiver and the subject.

First, then, in the notion of law there is necessarily implicated the idea of a personal lawgiver. When we denote a law we inevitably connote a person, single or corporate, as the *nidus* or source of that law. For laws are a species of commands; but commands proceed, *not* from things, but from persons. Laws therefore proceed from persons. This is the first implicate of law.

But laws are of different kinds. We have political laws, and moral laws: the former appertain to jurisprudence, the latter to ethics. Now political laws imply something more than mere personality in the lawgiver. It is implied that he is a political superior; that he is a person, corporate or single, possessing not only intelligence, but sovereignty in the state.

Turning to moral law, we find that it in turn implies the existence of a lawgiver possessing the most remarkable attributes. Moral laws are, as we have seen, distinct in kind from other sorts of law. All laws are indeed commands, but all laws are not ethical. In moral laws it is supposed—postulated that the projected wish is *right*, or, in other words, that what is

enjoined or forbidden is what *ought to be* enjoined or forbidden—that the acts or forbearances which are posited as law are strictly and exclusively *right* acts and *right* forbearances. But, such being the nature of moral law, is it not evident that the giver of that law must be a person who not only knows what under all circumstances it is right to enjoin or forbid, but also possesses authority over the interior life of man? A command, although enjoining what is right, yet is not, and never can constitute, a moral law; neither can any person, single or corporate, erect his interpretation of what is right, even if absolutely correct, into positive moral law, unless such person possess what alone can constitute moral sovereignty, namely, authority, original or derived, over the interior life, the heart, thoughts, emotions, will, conscience, of those commanded. Thus no right act can be made obligatory upon man's conscience by merely human legislation. It may indeed be erected by human *position* into positive law; but never into positive moral law. To posit moral law requires the authority of which we have spoken—authority, that is to say, of the inner as well as the outer life.

We learn then, secondly, that all moral law implicates the existence of a person who, as the author and source of that law, is possessed of moral sovereignty—possessed, in other words, of incontestable jurisdiction over the thoughts, emotions, volitions and consciences of all responsible intelligences.

But by *necessary implication* we learn somewhat further concerning the giver of moral law. It is clear that the being who originates the laws of morality must, besides possessing authority over the inner life

of man and other moral subjects, possess also power to adjudicate on obedience or disobedience, and also power nicely to graduate punishment in view of guilt, and power too as precisely to apply the punishments thus carefully and accurately graduated. This, then, is a third implicate of the moral law.

All law implies, again, not only a person as its source, but also a person as its terminus. Laws are commands, and commands are issued not to things, but to persons; and, as above, the nature of the law determines in some degree the capacities of the person or persons to whom the law is law. Political laws are addressed only to political animals, as Aristotle would say; that is, to the subject members of a commonwealth. Moral laws are, in like manner, addressed only to moral beings, beings conscious of a distinction between right and wrong, and of obligation to do the former and forbear from the latter.

Further, law is no law which has not been duly published or signified. That would scarcely be equitable legislation, or indeed legislation at all, which left the subject no other means of knowing the law than by mere inference from the scheme of sanctions to which he found himself amenable. Hence moral law implies the existence of an authoritative code duly and properly published. In other words, the existence of moral law involves equally the existence of a revelation. Without a revelation, moral law would be no such thing as law at all. Here then we learn:—

- i. That all law implies an intelligent lawgiver.
- ii. That all political law implies as lawgiver a person, corporate or single, possessed of political sovereignty, or sovereignty in the state.

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- iii. That all moral law implies as its lawgiver a person possessed in turn of moral sovereignty, or sovereignty over the conscience and the will.
  - iv. That law implies as its terminus persons, and *not* things; that political laws terminate in political persons, or persons in a political capacity; and that moral laws terminate in moral persons, or persons in a moral capacity.
  - v. That in the notion of all law there is implied that of its notification.
  - vi. That in the notion of all moral law there is implied that of revelation considered as the due and proper publication of its provisions.
  - vii. That the notion of law is adverse to that of the suspension of sanctions. Through sanctions, mere wishes become imperative, are converted into commands; through sanctions, obligations are created, and the wishes thus armed become binding and legal. Hence, the taking away of sanctions is the subtraction of the legal element.

Manifestly, therefore, only some extraordinary circumstance can account for such suspension of sanctions after that they have been actually incurred—can in fact warrant their suspension.

If this is true of all law, it is true in a more emphatic degree of that highest kind of law, the law of morality.

- viii. That in the case of all moral law, except in the exact degree in which its application is affected by some extraordinary and extra-natural circumstance, the infliction of its sanctions is absolutely certain and inevitable.

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These are in a summary form the principal implicates of law, whose importance in practice will be more truly realized in the subsequent portions of this essay. At present we have contented ourselves with little more than their bare enumeration. They do however, even as thus barely enumerated, serve to show that law, considered as a fact, cannot be insulated from other facts, and that, considered in its only true sense, it cannot be cognized or understood except in strict correlation with the chief concepts of a religious belief.

## CHAPTER V.

### ALL TRUE MORALITY NECESSARILY THEISTIC.

By a reference to the implicates of moral law given in the preceding chapter, we shall see that such law presupposes the existence of a supreme, percipient personality as its nidus or source. Not only is it true *à posteriori* that law as an entity must have a cause, but the idea of an intelligent personal being as its cause is involved in the very concept of law itself. It is, as Kant would say, an analytic proposition *à priori* that every law must have a lawgiver. In so saying, we do but evolve, or write out more fully, the contents of the true concept of what all law is. When we say that matter is created, and that therefore it must have a creator, we make a judgment not analytic, but synthetic. Our idea does not necessarily implex the idea of its being a thing made, nor therefore of its having a maker. We do more in such a judgment (namely, that matter was created) than merely write out the contents of our conception of matter. We *add* from experience or from some other source to that conception the notion of its being made or created. Hence the judgment is in this case synthetic. But in the judgment that every moral law must have a law-

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giver, we do but more fully state what *law* is. We add nothing to the idea or concept of law; we do but analyse its actual contents.

Hence we arrive at the notion of a being answering to the usual idea of God, more readily through the consideration of law than of matter. Matter may presuppose a creator: law must. Only, in the latter case he appears, not so much under the aspect of a creator, as under that of a moral ruler—a sovereign over the hearts and spirits of men.

It is here then in the moral world, rather than in the world of matter, that we obtain proof beyond cavil or possibility of doubt of the existence of a being, who, holding righteous sway over the whole realm of rational and responsible being, must be invested in our minds with attributes which we have ever been wont to think exclusively and incommunicably *Divine*. For it must be kept in view how much is implied in the origination and administration of moral law. The giver of moral law must be a being of unbounded knowledge, for he must not only know accurately and precisely, without excess or defect, what is *right*—right for all times, places and relations, past and future, actual and possible—but he must also know how justly and wisely to formulate the *right* in view of the infinite variety of circumstances determining and modifying its application. He must, upon the one hand, carry within himself the eternal norm of right, and upon the other, pre-cognize the entire course of the history of the whole moral creation. In the second instance he must possess moral sovereignty—supremacy over all responsible intelligences; while he is himself superior, in the infallible rectitude of his own nature, to the law which,



in view of the wellbeing of his fallible moral subjects, he has posited.

Then, not only must he have wisdom and authority, and that individual superiority to moral law which are necessary to a moral lawgiver, but he must also have scrutiny of the entire province covered by the law which he has created. But moral law reaches to the interior as well as to the exterior life of man. The lawgiver must therefore, in order to judging whether his law has or has not been obeyed, be able to extend his scrutiny to the region of the subjective life and conduct of all responsible intelligences, whether human or not; for responsibility implies subjection. He must be able to scrutinize and adjudicate upon the secret thoughts, desires, feelings, volitions, and motives of the spirit with infallible precision. He must be able, in brief, to 'search the hearts and try the reins.' And to this end he must have at his command an astounding chemistry of thought, of subtle psychological analysis and synthesis; to this end he must also know, as man never can know, the mechanism of mind in relation to organization, and be able, without admixture of error, to adjudicate upon the varying degrees in which, through the latter, the responsibility of the moral subject is or is not minished. There are, for example, hereditary predispositions to virtue as well as to vice, taking from the merit of the one and the demerit of the other; there are also varying capacities for good or for evil native in men, besides formative influences operating from without through a multitude of channels, and all either augmenting or diminishing the agent's culpability.

These are some only of the elements of evidence

by which the moral lawgiver must take unerring cognizance; and this must be done, not for the individual only, but also for the whole of the moral universe. Then, again, the moral lawgiver must be able not only to take cognizance of all the elements of evidence needful to a fair adjudication of each subject-person, but must also be able to devise for each a sentence strictly and evenly just—itself a stupendous juridical achievement for which the lifetime of the human race would be too short a period.

Nor is his work even yet fully accomplished. As the source of moral law, the personality in question is also by implication the source of the sanctions by which that law is armed. But here, as before, the task is equally colossal and stupendous. For not only must the multitudinous elements of moral evidence, affecting each of the millions upon millions of cases of transgression, be weighed and adjudged with as scrupulous justice as if it stood in single and solitary isolation, but the same master-mind which collated and digested this vast body of subtle and encyclopædic evidence, and pronounced upon it with rigid and impartial equity, must have at command resources so manifold and inexhaustible, as to enable him to graduate punishment with a precision as exact as had previously been required in determining what in each case the quantity and quality of such punishment ought to be. Such resources imply surely nothing less than omnipotence.

Moral laws, in brief, require to be administered morally. There is the what *ought to be* (τὸ δέον), not only of obedience, but also of lawgiving, judication, and punishment. Moral government is not the facile

thing it might at first sight seem. If, upon the contrary, its true *ethos* is to be maintained, the moral lawgiver or ruler must be a being of boundless knowledge, wisdom, and power. In a word, he must be higher than the highest creature; for the highest creature may fall, and thus the need may arise that there should be one able to adjudicate upon their possible lapse into transgression, which, if not adjudicated upon and punished, would leave neither room nor place for law at all.

Who then is this great commander whose 'word reacheth to the heavens?' Who is he to whom 'the darkness and the light are both alike,' who 'seeth in secret,' who 'searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men,' whose 'eye runneth to and fro in the earth beholding the evil and the good?' For by whatever name we may choose to designate so august and dread a personality, either he exists, or else moral law does not exist. For a being of no less astounding attributes is required to account for and sustain the idea of a law of right. Our alternative then is before us. Not to believe in the existence of morality is equivalent to denying the possibility of having any beliefs whatsoever. If we do not believe in a law of right, it matters but little what we *do* believe.

But if, like the rest of mankind, we allow the reality of moral distinctions, we must at the same time take those distinctions as they stand inseparably consociated with the existence and operation of a being whom we cannot without profanity designate by a less august and sacred name than that of God.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SYSTEMS OF ATHEISM IN THEIR RELATION TO ETHICAL INQUIRY.

AT this point in our inquiry we may pause to pass in review the chief phases of unbelief as they stand related respectively to ethical inquiry; for it cannot but be instructive to consider the forms through which error, or what is much the same thing, one-sided truth, is made to pass in its historical evolution. As we have already remarked, history is morals in actuality—nay, it is the world's last judgment prefigured and passed, as it were, already in review: as Schiller has admirably sung:—

‘Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht.’

‘The world's history is the world's tribunal.’

Now, as to the systems of atheism presented to us in the philosophy of Greece, we may remark that by Cudworth they are arranged into four distinct classes, which he terms the Hylopathic, the Atomic, the Hylozoic, and the Cosmo-plastic.

The first, or hylopathic atheism, as enunciated by Anaximander of Miletus, the first who gave to atheism a dogmatic form, resolved all things into matter (ὕλη), and the qualities, forms, or affections (πάθη) of matter.

Matter was regarded as infinite. It was the absolute, the eternal, the unconditioned all. But matter, according to the Anaximandrian system, could not have originated the universe by itself and alone. To matter there pertained certain inexistent or inherent contraries—that is to say, qualities or affections (πάθη) contrary in kind the one to the other. All the forms assumed by matter in its natural evolution existed either actually or potentially, commixed with matter. The infinite (τὸ ἄπειρον) was thus neither more nor less than an infinite chaos of matter and forms of matter incongruously confused together. Out of this infinite all finite existences and finite modes of existence were held to be fortuitously evolved by segregation. Such was the origin of the world, and such the origin of man. The whole present constitution of things was but a chance-evolution of some of the infinite variety of qualities, forms, or affections (πάθη) latent in matter and commingled with it<sup>1</sup>. The whole finite cosmos has started into momentary existence, like a bubble on the surface of the ocean, to be re-absorbed and replaced by some other finite form of being. To be brief, then, three things characterize this system of atheism:—(1) its materialism; for matter was the all, the infinite, the absolute; and (2) its doctrine of chance; and (3) its peculiar dogma of the commixture<sup>2</sup> of forms, qualities,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Plutarch, *De Placitis Philosophorum*, Lib. I. cap. iii.; Eusebius, *Evang. Præp.* Lib. I. p. 15, ed. Steph.

<sup>2</sup> *Metaphysicor.* Lib. XIV. cap. ii. Καὶ τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ Ἀναξαγόρου ἔν· Βέλτιον γὰρ ἢν ὁμοῦ πάντα, καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλέους τὸ μίγμα καὶ Ἀναξιμάνδρου. 'And this is the one thing of Anaxagoras; preferable to the all things together, and the mixture of Empedocles and Anaximander.' Cudworth, *Intell. System*, vol. i. pp. 179–189.

or affections, along with the *prima materia*, or infinite substance to which all finite existences referred them as to their source and terminus.

The second, or *atomic* atheism, as expounded by Leucippus, Democritus, and Protagoras, was, like the atheism of Anaximander, absolutely materialistic. It propounded that there was no primitive entity but matter; but it thoroughly rejected the Anaximandrian dogma concerning the commixture with the *materia prima* of qualities and affections. The Democritic doctrine concerning the ultimate constitution of matter, as contrasted with that of Anaximander, was that it was atomic. Atoms were the first principles of all things—ἀρχὰς τῶν ὅλων ἀτόμους<sup>1</sup>. And more: these atoms were supposed to be devoid of all qualities or affections. Thus Plutarch testifies concerning this dogma of Democritus:—Τί γὰρ λέγει Δημόκριτος; οὐσίας ἀπείρους τὸ πλῆθος, ἀτόμους τε καὶ ἀδιαφόρους ἐπὶ δὲ ἀποίους, καὶ ἀπαθείς ἐν τῷ κενῷ φέρεσθαι διεσπαρμένας,—‘Quid enim dicit Democritus? Substantias multitudine infinita, divisionis et differentia, qualitatis quoque et affectionis expertes in vacuo ferri dispersas<sup>2</sup>.’ With the hylopathian or Anaximandrian atheists matter was endued with all kinds of qualities and affections, actual and potential; but the Democritic atheists, while adopting the theory which made all matter atomic in its ultimate constitution, also insisted upon the doctrine that these ultimate atoms were, as we saw in the excerpt from Plutarch, ἀποίους καὶ ἀπαθείς—‘qualitatis quoque et affectionis expertes,’ devoid of qualities and

<sup>1</sup> Diog. Laert. Lib. X. § 41.

<sup>2</sup> Adv. Colotem, tom. ii. Opp. p. 1110, cited by Mosheim. Cf. Intell. Syst. vol. i. p. 13.

affections. All that the atomic atheism allowed to these primitive monads, or corpuscles, in the way of qualities, were magnitude, figure, site, and a certain kind of local or mechanical motion, communicated of necessity from without by a principle of fate. Fate (εἰμαρμένη) was the prime mover. It was necessary, as the atoms were not automatic, that motion should be communicated to them by some extraneous principle. That principle was, according to Leucippus and Democritus, not intelligence, not God, but fate. Anaximander had got over this difficulty by laying down the doctrine that motion is eternal, and is as an ἀρχή or *principium* more ancient than the water (ὕδωρ) or moisture (ὕγρον) of Thales<sup>1</sup>. But the atomic system, in the absence of this Anaximandrian theory of the eternity of motion, called in the principle of fate in order to account for the existence of motion among lifeless atoms—atoms destitute alike of qualities and affections. This motion however, having been once communicated, the atoms were supposed to be determined in their combinations by no intelligent agent, nor even by fate itself, but solely and only by fortuity or chance (τύχη). According, therefore, to the Democritic system of Atheism, all qualities of inorganic matter, together with sense, intellect, and the other attributes of organized beings, were traced to a fortuitous concourse of atoms—were, in brief, merely secondary

<sup>1</sup> Hermias, in *Irrisione Gentil. Philos. sect. x. p. 221*, ed. Worth, writes:—'Αναξίμανδρος τοῦ ὕγρου πρεσβυτέρων ἀρχὴν εἶναι λέγει τὴν αἰδίων κίνησιν, καὶ ταύτη τὰ μὲν γεννᾶσθαι, τὰ δὲ φθείρεσθαι. 'Anaximander teaches that there is some principle more ancient than moisture, that motion is eternal, and that some things arise from it, others perish.'—Cited by Mosheim.

products, which, having been evolved from matter, admitted in like manner of resolution into matter. As a corollary from their fundamental position, the Democritics denied therefore the independent existence of immaterial beings as soul or spirit—denied, in fact, their existence at all except as modes of matter and of material development.

There are, then, four characteristic elements in this system: (1) its materialism; (2) its atomology; (3) its doctrine of fate or its fatalism; and (4) its doctrine of chance.

These were essentially the physical dogmas of Epicurus, as set forth so fully by Lucretius.

The third, or *hylozoic* system of atheism, was, like those of Anaximander and Democritus, essentially materialistic. The hylozoists, headed by Strato Physicus, held that there was no other entity but matter. They also held that in its ultimate constitution it was atomic; but, in contradistinction from the Democritics, they held that in each atom there resided a natural, spermatic life, which was neither sentient nor rational, but purely plastic and devoid of consciousness. Thus Velleius, in Cicero, contends against Strato,—‘Nec audiendus Strato, qui Physicus appellatur, qui omnem vim divinam in naturâ sitam esse censet, quæ causas gignendi augendi, minuendive habeat, sed *careat sensu*<sup>1</sup>.’ By means of this plastic life resident in each atom, matter was supposed to be able to form itself methodically and symmetrically, so that, when organization had been evolved, matter might even attain to sentient and conscious existence. There was, however, another element in hylozoism; for although this plastic life

<sup>1</sup> De Nat. Deor. Lib. I. cap. xiii.



resided in each atom, it might, like the life of the seed, remain latent until it had been excited into activity from without. Here, then, comes in the doctrine of fortune or chance (*τύχη*), which acts as the external excitation to inherent plastic principle.

Here, then, are three characteristic elements of the hylozoic or Stratonian atheism:—(1) its materialism; (2) its atomology; (3) its location of plastic life in each atom; and (4) its doctrine of fate, for the plastic life acted as a principle of fate; and (5) its doctrine of chance.

The fourth system, called by Cudworth the Cosmoplastic, was, like the Anaximandrian, the Democritic, and the Stratonian atheisms, materialistic. The only primitive entity was matter; but matter was conceived of as an organized whole, pervaded by one principle of plastic life. The world was, in a word, but a huge plant. It was orderly and symmetrical, for this simple reason, that a plant is orderly and symmetrical. The cosmoplastic atheism differs from the hylozoic chiefly in this, that, whereas the latter attributes a distinct spermatogenic life to every individual totum or atom, the former allows but one spermatogenic life common to all matter, and dominating over the whole material universe. There is, however, another important point of diversity between them, namely, that the cosmoplastic atheism entirely excludes all idea of fortuity. Matter was regarded as subject to one plastic or plantal fate. By means of this plastic fate, all the harmony, order, and symmetry of the entire cosmos were, in the view of the cosmoplastic atheism, evolved with as necessary a precision as the foliage, efflorescence, and fruitage of herb or tree are evolved from their respective seeds.

Here then, again, are three characteristics:—(1) materialism; (2) the doctrine concerning the one plastic principle; and (3) fatalism, or the doctrine of necessity.

Closely analogous to the cosmoplastic system, but pertaining rather to pantheism than atheism, there was what Cudworth calls Cosmo-zoism, which, improving upon the conception that the world or mundus was a huge plant, made it rather a huge animal. But upon this system we cannot linger; but must remain content with having just indicated its existence.

Now, with regard to the four systems of atheism enumerated, it may be seen that their points of agreement are very remarkable. They are, for example, all agreed in at least two particulars—namely, their materialism and their determinism. According to the first, whatever is is material; and according to the second, whatever is is right. Other differences were of minor importance. Here is atheism, as it has ever and always existed; and its relation to all our most cherished convictions appears at a glance. Materialism, setting up that matter is the only real existence, excludes all theology and all religion. Determinism, propounding that whatever is is as it ought to be, excludes in its turn free-will and morality. It is true that Epicurus endeavoured to introduce into his system the notion of contingent liberty, but in so doing he was an inconsistent atheist.

We have spoken of materialism and determinism as if they existed, or might exist, apart. But this is not the case, nor can we allow them to be thought of, except as in inseparable union, the latter with the former. The doctrine of determinism may be held

apart from materialism, but never materialism apart from determinism. Hence all forms of materialism are not only, therefore, subversive of all theology and of all piety, but also of all morality, and of all moral freedom.

Now, as it is with the ethical bearings of these systems that we are more especially concerned, we may do well to take cognizance of the actual historical doctrines on psychology and ethics to which these atheisms conducted their adherents. Up to the time of Anaximander the philosophy of Greece was almost exclusively versant with physical inquiry, and his system of atheism must be regarded rather as a physical speculation than as related to the later investigations of morals and metaphysics. No especial ethical dogma appears therefore to have attached to the Anaximandrian atheism. The atomic system, however, as it belongs to a later period, so also looks directly towards later speculations.

Protagoras, as is well known, laid down that ‘man was the measure of all things, of existences as they are, and of non-existences as they are not <sup>1</sup>.’ And the comment of Socrates upon this dogma explains it clearly and forcibly. ‘It appears to me that whatever any one knows he perceives by sense what he knows; and, as it now appears, knowledge is nothing else than sensation’ — οὐκ ἄλλο τί ἐστιν ἐπιστήμη ἢ αἴσθησις. Sense was thus made the criterion of truth. And accordingly nothing was absolutely true, true immutably; but all knowledge, intellectual and moral alike, was only relative

<sup>1</sup> Πρωταγόρας ἔλεγε, πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπον εἶναι, τῶν μὲν ὄντων, ὡς ἔστι, τῶν δὲ μὴ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστι. Plato, Theæt. p. 118. Diog. Laert. Lib. IX. segm. 51.

(τὸ πρὸς τι), true relatively to sense. Truth and falsehood were such, not in reality, but only relatively to each man's perception. And similarly of the concept of right. What is truth to one man might be falsehood to another. What is right to one man, one age, or one commonwealth, might be wrong to another man, another age, or another commonwealth; and conversely. For since all knowledge is derived through sense, and since all that is given in sense is merely phenomenal, merely the seeming, all knowledge is merely phantastic. Each of us is the measure of what is and is not, and therefore every opinion is true—*πάντα δόξα ἀληθής*. Hence, by Protagoras it was affirmed that right and wrong, like truth and falsehood, were not such immutably and by nature, but only by human position. Whatever things seem to be good or virtuous to each state, are such to that state as long as they seem such—*ἕως ἂν αὐτὰ νομίζῃ*<sup>1</sup>. Morality is thus treated as being factitious and arbitrary, varying with the varying opinion and varying legislation of individual men and individual states. And so far Protagoras was a consistent atheist. These were the conclusions to which his fundamental principles naturally conducted him—namely, the identification of knowledge with sensation, and of morality with opinion, or, at the best, with the laws of jurisprudence.

Democritus indeed admitted that all knowledge was not derived through sense, affirming in his canons that there are two kinds of knowledges, the one by the senses (*διὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων*), and the other by the mind or by

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Theætetus*, p. 167. Cf. Cudworth's *Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, Bk. II. ch. i. p. 542.

reflection (διὰ τῆς διανοίας)<sup>1</sup>. But the admission was practically valueless by the materialism of his system of philosophy. This knowledge by reflection was but a secondary sort of sense-knowledge. For whence were derived the materials for reflection? These were of course derived from sense, as Democritus, like Protagoras, repeatedly affirmed. This is plainly seen in his theory of perception by means of material images (εἰδωλα) passing from the object to the subject. The difference between Democritus and Leucippus is therefore practically nil. All knowledge was either directly or indirectly derived from sense. But even were this not the case, even supposing that in the very teeth of his atheism he had held to the existence of *à priori* cognitions, the actual practical tendency of such atheism could not have been other than adverse to a sound psychology and a safe morality.

Out of materialism nothing but sense-philosophy can consistently arise. For if there is no real entity save matter, or, as the Democritics would say, save atoms and vacuum, not only sense itself—or, in other words, sentient organization—but mind so-called are alike mere modes of material existence. Organized matter may reflect as well as feel by its organs of sense; but matter, whether reflective or sentient, cannot transcend itself. It is impossible upon the hypothesis of materialism that knowledge should ever be more than imagery, more or less distinct of the phenomena of sense. Hence in like manner the atomic atheists regarded not only all thought but also all volition as induced by the action upon the percipient subject of the subtle eidola or images of external objects. Hence volition was not

<sup>1</sup> Sextus Empiricus, Advers. Logicos, Lib. I. segm. 135.

free, but was the material effect of the impact upon the material senses of the images which are constantly being thrown off by the numerous objects of the external world.

Manifestly therefore a system which allowed of the existence of mind only as a mode of material existence; which assigned to the mind thus originated only an ephemeral and transient duration; which made sense the source of all knowledge; and which treated all knowledge and all volition as being alike necessarily determined,—left no place for other than a factitious and artificial morality, a morality which can have no existence as law except as it is posited by human legislation, and which therefore is morality only in name.

Sophistry was the natural outgrowth of these systems of atheism. Absolute materialism leads by inevitable logic to absolute scepticism. The Sophists did at least this service to human thought, that they reduced atheistic materialism, with its sensuous philosophy, its absolute empiricism, to its natural issue. They gave us the *reductio ad absurdum* of prior systems. Employing as an organon the principles of Anaximander, Protagoras, Democritus, and Leucippus, it was easy to make the worse appear the better reason (τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν); to make truth appear as falsehood, and falsehood as truth; to make right appear wrong, and wrong right; to make virtue appear as vice, and vice as virtue; good appear evil, and evil good. It was easy, in brief, thus armed to overturn all beliefs, theological, psychological, and ethical, and utterly rout and destroy every established principle whether of faith or practice.

We all know how the noble Socrates lent the whole force of his life and character to the counteraction of the dangerous scepticism to which his contemporaries the Sophists had given the widest currency<sup>1</sup>. As a teacher of youth and as an earnest man the illustrious son of Sophroniscus uttered a worthy protest against unbridled and reckless unbelief, and left the impress of his character upon the subsequent history of Greek philosophy. His idea of ethics was essentially at fault, it is true; but faulty as it was it did good service. His obvious resort against unlimited scepticism was to the fundamental moral beliefs which are ineradicably fixed in the hearts of men. His conception of ethics might be mistaken; but, whereas until now philosophers had concerned themselves almost wholly with physics and metaphysics, Socrates succeeded in giving to ethical inquiry a foremost place in the future philosophy of Greece.

Hence, following closely in the wake of Socrates, the Megarics insisted that the *One* was not *infinite matter* as Melissos had propounded, nor *finite reason* as Parmenides had said; but was *the good* (τὸ ἀγαθόν). Here the Socratic ethical tendency is added to the Eleatic physical speculation.

The Cyrenaics and Cynics further exhibited this tendency. Aristippus, the founder of the Cyrenaic school, was not content with any abstract conception of the good, and therefore resolved it into the concrete conception of pleasure. Pleasure was the happiness after which all men seek. It constituted the highest good—the supreme aim of all morality; and virtue was contemplated merely as a means to this end.

The Cynics adopted an exactly opposite interpreta-

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Apologia Socrat.* cap. iii.

tion of the good. With them, as with Socrates, knowledge creates the good. Virtue reposing upon knowledge is the highest aim of human life; and virtue proves itself essentially in antagonism with irrational appetites. The highest degree of virtue was held to consist in absolute immunity from all sensuous appetites<sup>1</sup>.

Of the reaction established by Socrates we cannot, however, do more here than remark that, in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, and in the mutual antagonism of Stoicism with Epicureanism, and, in brief, throughout all subsequent speculation, the influence of that reaction is clearly perceptible.

Of Epicureanism, as standing in a sort of affiliation to the second of the systems of atheism (the atomic) before described, we may nevertheless appropriately take more particular notice. In Epicurus there is moreover something like an attempt at systematic ethical dogma. His physical doctrines were identically those of Democritus. He was a materialist. He was an atheist. What therefore, with such fundamental positions, was the character of his ethical system? If ethics is at all possible to atheism, Epicurus was fully qualified, both by his personal talents and his historical position, to evoke that possibility to the full.

Now the Epicurean morality, like that of the Cyrenaics, was purely eudæmonistic. Happiness (*εὐδαιμονία*) was the end and aim of all his philosophy. But what constitutes happiness? Aristippus had affirmed that it was pleasure; and in this representation Epicurus acquiesced. Pleasures might vary as to quantity and duration, however, and those pleasures are therefore to

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, Handb. der christl. Sittenlehre, Band i. S. 53.



be preferred which contain in themselves the largest quantity and longest duration of enjoyment. Hence the grosser, more sensual pleasures are to be rejected—rejected not because of any turpitude appertaining to them, but because of the brevity of the enjoyment afforded by them.

Since then pleasure is happiness, that which produces pleasure is virtue; and that which produces pain is vice. The chief concernment of this system is that of a precise calculus of pleasures and pains. It is not ethics; it is eudæmonics<sup>1</sup>. But pleasure and pain are sense-experiences; and since, according to the atomic philosophy, all sense-experiences are only relatively true, there is no absolute truth in morality. Morality is purely relative, purely arbitrary, purely factitious. What may be pain to one man, may not be pain, nay, may even be pleasure, to another. Therefore what would be vice in A, may be indifferent in B, and even virtue in C.

Hence, quite consistently with his materialism, Epicurus denied, as did Protagoras, Democritus, Aristippus, Pyrrho, and others, the absolute existence of right or wrong. ‘There is no such thing,’ he writes, ‘as righteousness *per se*; but only in the conventions of men one with another’—οὐκ ἦν τὸ καθ’ ἑαυτὸ δικαιοσύνη, ἀλλὰ ἐν ταῖς μετὰ ἀλλήλων συντροφαῖς<sup>2</sup>.

Atheism is the same, then, not less in the hands of

<sup>1</sup> Schopenhauer, *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik*, p. 117. Leipzig, 1860. ‘Die Ethik der alten war Eudämonik. Unter den alten machte Plato allein eine Ausnahme.’

<sup>2</sup> The words of Epicurus in his *Κυρίαὶ Δόξαι*, § 36, in Diog. Laert. Lib. X. § 150. Cf. Cudworth’s *Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, Bk. I. cap. i. Works, vol. iii. p. 527.

Epicurus than in those of Protagoras and Democritus. It conducts to one and the same issue—to wit, the utter extrusion of all true morality, and the intrusion into its place of absolute unbelief.

Hence Pyrrhonism followed upon the heels of Epicureanism, just as the mocking scepticism of the Sophists followed upon the heels of hylopathism and the atomical philosophy. The Pyrrhonists, pushing the materialism of Epicurus to its legitimate consequences, denied the possibility of a criterion of truth.

The ethics of atheism assumes, therefore, one or other of the following forms :—

1. It may in theory (as it always does in practice) totally subvert the idea of morality by making all human action necessary, and by resolving all phenomena, mental and moral as well as physical, into the mere motions of matter or of atoms of matter.

2. It may allow a sort of conventional morality arbitrarily created by merely human position, and being therefore variable in different places and periods—in the same place at different times, as also in different places at the same time—with the variations of state legislation.

3. It may also graft upon this conception of a conventional morality a principle of eudæmonism. It may contemplate pleasure, or the well-being of the community, or some other similar consideration as a chief good, laying that down as virtue which conduces to this end, and as vice that which prejudices its attainment.

But we have seen that without moral law there can be no moral obligation, and that moral law implies of necessity the existence of a person of stupendous wis-

dom and power as moral lawgiver, and that, in brief, the notion of a Divine personality lies at the basis of all morality. Rules of conduct are mere principles of art, having neither vindictory sanctions, nor consequently any binding authority over man apart from the existence of a Divine Being. In a word, the ethics of atheism sinks to the level of mere art, or economics, or jurisprudence. But in jurisprudence, in art, in economics, or what is the same thing, in eudæmonism, as such, there exists not the faintest trace of an ethical element. The ethics of atheism is therefore an illusion—is not ethics at all, but a something essentially and entirely alien from whatever could with any propriety bear that designation.

The history of atheism thus goes to prove what we affirmed in our last chapter, that to hold to atheism is to reject morality, and conversely. They are, in short, incompatible beliefs: nay, they are beliefs mutually destructive the one of the other. So that when an atheist holds by morality, either he is, as an atheist, inconsistent, and does not realize the correlations of moral truth, or else the morality by which he holds is in reality no morality at all, but only a counterfeit, a figment, and a pretence.

We have already seen that materialism leads to empiricism. The history of thought, from Bacon down to the present time, amply illustrates the truth of the converse of this proposition. For just as materialism leads to empiricism, so empiricism, although allowing at its outset the existence of spirit as an independent essence or entity, yet tends inevitably towards materialism.

The basis of empiricism was laid afresh by Bacon,

who, however, was as far as possible removed from any suspicion of either materialism or atheism.

Hobbes, nevertheless, speedily applied the principles of empiricism to theological and moral problems. His fundamental position was, that 'there is no conception which has not first been begotten in some of the senses <sup>1</sup>.' All our experience, therefore, is sensuous; and only what we thus experience is true, whether it be subjective or objective. Hence human action has no object (for an object is a mere idea, and therefore has no actuality), but only a ground or basis,—this being placed in its sensuous-material actuality, by which it is entirely determined.

Thus, according to Hobbes, moral law differs in nothing from the law of nature. Good and evil are the well and the evil experience of the individual, and have no universal validity. What is good for one, is evil for another. Good cannot, therefore, be universally fixed and settled. It is merely relative to the individual. Self-love—in its widest sense all that relates to the pleasure of the individual—is the highest moral law. Each has a right to all. But this does not demonstrate, according to Hobbes, the non-veracity of the moral law, but rather the necessity for the state. And this in its turn can only repose, through defect of a universally valid and objective norm of morality, upon the will of the strongest <sup>2</sup>. And this is his *Leviathan*. Hobbes is thus but the Epicurus of English philosophy.

As a reaction against empiricism, after that it had

<sup>1</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Pt. I. c. i. 'Nulla est animi conceptio, quæ non fuerat ante genita in aliquo sensuum.'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wuttke, *Sittenlehre*, Band i. 238.

been fully developed into a philosophy by Locke, came the idealism of Berkeley; and as its legitimate consequence, there followed the absolute scepticism of Hume.

It is with Hume's (A.D. 1711-1776) morals, however, that we are alone concerned. An actual science of ethics he did not develope; for, in agreement with his characteristic scepticism, he denied the possibility of such a science. Morality he regarded not as the object of the percipient understanding, but of the emotions. Happiness is regarded as the ultimate aim of all actions. What makes happy is discernible by a sense innate in human nature. The useful is found to excite a moral pleasure, especially that which is useful to the community. There are no universal and necessary moral ideas; even the moral feeling is very variable among different peoples. Moral presentations (intuitions) have thus never more than a limited value, and repose essentially upon custom. The obligation to virtue rests upon the circumstance that in it (virtue) the greatest security for actual happiness is guaranteed; and from the consideration that to work well to another reacts eventually in favour of our own well-being. Add to all this that Hume, like Hobbes<sup>1</sup> and Spinoza, affirmed that our volitions were necessary, not free. 'It appears,' he writes, 'that the conjunction between motives and voluntary actions is as regular and uniform as that between the cause and the effect in any part of nature. . . . It seems almost impossible,

<sup>1</sup> Hobbes, *Moral and Political Works*, Lond. 1750, pp. 463-485. 'Every accident, how contingent soever it seem, or how voluntary soever it be, is produced *necessarily*.'

therefore, to engage either in science or action of any kind, without acknowledging the doctrine of necessity<sup>1</sup>. Again, the real character of Hume's ethical doctrine is clearly appreciable from the subjoined citation from his *Essay on Liberty and Necessity*:—'The ultimate author of all our volitions is the creator of the world, who first bestowed motion on this immense machine, and placed all beings in that particular position, whence every subsequent event, by an inevitable necessity, must result. Human actions, therefore, can have no turpitude at all, as proceeding from so good a cause, or, if they have any turpitude, they must involve our creator in the same guilt, while he is acknowledged to be their ultimate cause and author. For, as a man who fired a mine is answerable for all the consequences, whether the train employed be long or short; so, wherever a continued chain of necessary causes is fixed, that being, either finite or infinite, who produces the first, is likewise the author of all the rest.'

In Hume's scepticism, then, matter is nothing, spirit is nothing. If the occult substratum (matter), which had been supposed to underlie all material phenomena, could be denied, as it had been denied by Berkeley, because of any such substratum we possess no knowledge based upon experience, then why not also extend the same reasoning to the occult substratum (mind) which, it is supposed, must have existence in order to a due explication of mental phenomena. And this was precisely what Hume accomplished. Hence his absolute philosophical scepticism.

<sup>1</sup> Hume, *Essay on Liberty and Necessity*. Cf. Schopenhauer, *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik*, pp. 69, 70, 77.

Even belief is treated as a species of sensation fatalistically determined. 'Belief,' he writes, 'is more properly an act of the sensitive than of the cogitative part of our nature<sup>1</sup>:' while, as we have seen, experience had conducted Hume in the department of morals to the denial of the reality and universality of moral distinctions, of the freedom of the will, and of moral accountability. Here, again, as in Sophistry and Pyrrhonism, is the reduction to absurdity of empiricism, leading, as it does, to absolute scepticism in philosophy on the one hand, and upon the other to absolute determinism in morality.

In England the consequences of empiricism, as enforced by Hobbes and Locke, were further developed by the 'Free-thinkers.' Thus Collins, who was the first to assume that designation,—a panegyrist of Epicurus, and a disciple and friend of Locke,—denied the freedom of the will, maintaining that human action was absolutely determined by surrounding circumstances. Bolingbroke next based, like Hobbes, all morality upon self-love. Self-love it was which stimulated man to marriage, to family and society, and to the duties arising out of these relationships. All human endeavour contemplated the attainment of the greatest possible amount of happiness, that is, the greatest possible number of pleasurable experiences. Thus the law of nature, that law by which men live in their natural estate, is identical with the law of morality, and is easily known through observation of existence. And among other things which this moral law teaches, in the opinion of this chief representative of English

<sup>1</sup> Human Nature, Pt. IV. sect. 1.

Deism, we may mention polygamy and immodesty, which are not immoral, but virtuous and good; modesty being but a *hauteur* of man, in his affectation of superiority to the brute.

It was in France, however, that empiricism threw off all restraint. Passing over the forms it assumed in the philosophical systems of Condillac and Helvetius, we encounter in the writings of Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, and the Encyclopædists, the ultimate issues of the sensational philosophy.

Rousseau wrote indeed no system of morals; but he nevertheless exercised a most remarkable influence in the province of moral opinion. Starting with the principles of Locke, he educed thence all his peculiar dogmas. 'His *Contrat Social* was the theoretic basis of the French Revolution. His *Emile* was, and still is, the catechism of every anti-Christian doctrine of education<sup>1</sup>. Morality he grounded upon the natural conscience, which, as an immediate moral sense or moral feeling, made all instruction quite unnecessary. Thus true education consisted in non-education. In man's nature there is nothing evil, and hence every natural instinct is good. A child, therefore, left to its natural conscience would without extraneous help develop itself as regularly as would a tree which had been planted in good ground.

All morality is thus identical with libertinism, or consists, in other words, in yielding the utmost latitude to our natural propensities.

It is manifest on the instant that doctrines more outrageous, and more menacing to the best interests

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Sittenlehre*, Band i. 250, 251.



of society, could not possibly have been enunciated. It is revolution in theory. It is anarchy set up as dogma. It is immorality exalted to a science.

Voltaire's principles were similar. . . . . Morality was, of course, divorced from religion, while the former was made to repose upon a natural, innate instinct common to all men as thinking beings<sup>1</sup>. Virtue and vice, moral good and moral evil, are universally that which is useful or noxious to society. The only measure of good and evil is the well-being of society. Moral judgments may, therefore, differ under different circumstances. Thus, according to Voltaire, under certain social conditions, even adultery, lasciviousness, rape, nay, even incest between parent and child, may be not only lawful, but even obligatory as a duty. As to the existence of a Divinely revealed moral law, that he utterly and unconditionally denied. Such were Voltaire's so-called metaphysics<sup>2</sup>.

But the worst is not yet told. What remnant of religious consciousness might have remained in Rousseau and Voltaire, was entirely put to flight by the Encyclopædists, and especially by Diderot. Diderot sought, above all things, entirely to sunder morals from religion, oscillating in his consideration of ethics between a naturalistic determinism on the one hand, and a superficial social-morality or socialism on the other. The Epicurean presentment of morals he regarded as the best and truest. All vices arose, according to Diderot, out of avarice, and consequently might be

<sup>1</sup> Œuvres, Paris, 1830, t. 31, 262; t. 12, 160; t. 42, 583, 594.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. t. 37, 336; t. 38, 40. Cf. Wuttke, Handbuch der christlichen Sittenlehre, Bd. i. 252.

obviated by the abolition of ownership. In a word, communism was his catholicon<sup>1</sup>.

In *De la Mettrie*<sup>2</sup>, however, naturalism in morals assumed its true physiognomy. First of all, religion and morals were placed in irreconcilable antagonism with philosophy. Morals was based upon politics, and made entirely a matter of police. Its sole service was as a curb to the masses, and as an institution stood precisely upon the same grounds upon which the civil power has introduced the hangman and capital punishment. As to religion, it has, according to *De la Mettrie*, poisoned and dethroned nature; and man can never more be happy, until all the world has embraced atheism. Where truth, i.e. atheism prevails, there man follows no law other than that of his own individual propensities, and so is happy. But man, what is he? Man, affirms *De la Mettrie*, differs not essentially from the brutes; no, not even by the possession of a distinctive moral consciousness; while in many respects he is their inferior. He is beset indeed by greater necessities than they, and upon this account alone a greater degree of perfectibility is, in his case, made possible. Otherwise man, who has himself arisen by variation out of the sexual intercourse of divers species of animals, is a mere material organism,—for the soul is but the brain;—a mere machine, set in motion by impulses from without, and is by consequence necessarily determined in every act of volition, being therefore in no way responsible for any of his actions. Consequently regret is sheer folly, for man is not to

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Handbuch der christlichen Sittenlehre*, Bd. i. p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *L'homme machine*, 1748; also in his *Œuvres philos.*, 1751, published anonymously; *L'Art de jouir*, 1751.

blame if he is a badly constructed machine. Crime is therefore neither to be despised, nor hardly adjudged. Since for man all is over at death, he must needs enjoy the present as much as possible. For to refuse pleasure when it is proffered, is like waiting by a banquet until it is consumed. Pleasure, in fine, and certainly chiefest and most preferably pleasure of sense, is our highest and only destination.

Here empiricism has eventuated actually and historically at once in absolute atheism, in absolute materialism, and in not less absolute fatalism.

But the supreme result of empiricism is seen most conspicuously in the '*Système de la Nature*,' edited by Baron Holbach, in conjunction with Mirabaud and other Encyclopædists. Here we have the appropriate evangel of atheism<sup>1</sup>. Here we have the normal sequences of the philosophy of Hobbes, Locke, and Condillac. Here too, as in *De la Mettrie*, man is but a material machine; and since this is the case, the distinction between the physical and the moral life disappears. All thought and volition consist only in modifications of the brain. All prepossessions and passions are purely bodily states, are either hatred or love, that is, 'attraction or repulsion.' The nonsensical dogma of the freedom of the will was only invented to vindicate the equally nonsensical dogma of a Divine Providence. Man is only a part, determined in all its movements, of the great world-machine—a blind instrument in the hands of necessity. The concession of freedom to but one individual being would involve

<sup>1</sup> '*Das eigentliche Evangelium des Atheismus.*'—Wuttke, *Sittenlehre*, Band i. 253.

the whole universe in anarchy. All that happens, happens by necessity. Religion and its morality are man's greatest enemies and tormentors. The system of nature alone makes man truly happy; teaches him, as far as possible, to enjoy the present; and gives him a necessary apathy to all happiness not coming within the province of pleasure. Its fundamental principle is, 'enjoy life as much as thou canst.' Self-love, a manifestation of the law of gravitation, is the supreme law of morality. The chief condition of happiness is bodily health. The true key to the heart is medicine. Whoever heals the body, makes the man moral. Crimes and delinquencies are only the results of bodily disease: are not sin, but a necessity. Repentance is, therefore, folly; and obligation a mere prejudice.

Such were the doctrines of the '*Système de la Nature*,' which, sinking down into the hearts of the people, speedily resolved themselves into practical results. And what were those results? The ten years of revolution are the practical phenomenon of this naturalistic, atheistic morality, considered as a social force<sup>1</sup>.

Nor did the demoniacal phrenzy, the sanguinary anarchy, and the ghastly delirium of that awful decade, extinguish, as might indeed have been expected, the godless doctrines which had conducted to such frightful issues. Upon the contrary, a system of materialism far more dangerous than that avowed by Mirabaud, Diderot, or De la Mettrie, is in our own day threatening—vainly, it must be admitted—to

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Handbuch der christlichen Sittenlehre*, Band i. 237-254.

overturn all past systems, whether of morals, religion, or philosophy. In Auguste Comte we encounter no timid, modest unbeliever, no anchorite, no ascetic, but one who claims to be the founder of a new faith which is to be the one and only religion of all coming ages and generations. Positivism or humanitarianism starts with the rejection of all belief in God, or in anything supernatural. And yet Comte calls positivism a religion. The term is manifestly employed in a new sense. 'In itself it indicates,' writes Comte of religion, 'the state of complete *unity* which characterizes our personal and social existence, when all its parts, both moral and physical, converge habitually towards a common destination. Thus this term is equivalent to the word *synthesis*<sup>1</sup>.' Religion, then, is individual and social harmony. It is the unity of man with himself, and of men one with another. And this unity constitutes the best measure of true perfection<sup>2</sup>. Here we easily perceive the socialistic germ which characterized the systems of the Encyclopædists. Allowing, however, this arbitrary definition of religion, one may ask whether Christianity has not effected this, and indeed a much higher harmony of men with themselves and with one another? To this, positivism replies that 'there exists in reality but one only religion at once universal and definitive, towards which all provisional and partial religions tend, agreeably to their respective situations. To these diverse empiric efforts there now succeeds the systematic development of the unity of man.' In other words,

<sup>1</sup> *Catéchisme Positive, ou Sommaire Exposition de la Religion Universelle*, Introd. p. 2. Paris, 1852.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3.

positivism is the one true religion in relation to which Christianity, Islamism, Brahminism, and, in brief, all other religions stand as merely preparatory and provisional faiths. They were merely empiric efforts, useful in their day, but have only an historical interest now that in the course of the ages the true faith, the universal religion, has received its due development.

As to the domain of this religion, it is manifest that it is concerned as much with man's material as with his mental and moral being. Medicine is therefore a part of religion and of morality. As to the general conditions of religion, that very word 'religion' sufficiently explains them. It expresses a two-fold liaison. 'In order to constitute a complete and durable harmony, it is necessary to bind together our inner being by love, and to bind it back (*relier*) to the outer world by faith.' Here, then, we have two unities, an interior and an exterior unity. Of the first Comte says, that it 'supposes, before all things, a sentiment to which our different prepossessions may subordinate themselves. For, our actions and our thoughts being always directed by our affections, the harmony of our nature becomes impossible, if these are not co-ordinated under a preponderating instinct. But this interior condition of unity would not suffice, unless intelligence made us recognise, without, a superior power, to which our existence ought always to submit<sup>1</sup>.' What, then, is this preponderating instinct? Is it conscience? And what is this superior power with its supreme empire? Is it God? Certainly not.

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 7.

There are two unities to be maintained. Personal unity is to be reconciled with social unity. And these are in turn to be subordinated to the superior objective order of the exterior world.

Now in order to reconcile man as a unit with society as a unit, in such manner as to make sociality prevail over personality<sup>1</sup>, positivism calls in a principle of altruism. It takes for granted the existence in men of disinterested affections<sup>2</sup>. And this done, it makes the preponderant instinct to which the interior life is to subordinate itself, that of desire for the well-being of others. Self-love is no longer, as in Hobbes, Bolingbroke, De la Mettrie, and Mirabaud, the supreme law of morality. Upon the contrary, egoism or self-love is to be subordinated to altruism or the love of others. Hence all sound morality is condensed in the positivist maxim, *Vivre pour autrui*<sup>3</sup>.

The positivist faith.—‘Our faith,’ writes Comte, ‘has never but one identical object—to conceive the order of the universe which governs human existence, in order to determine our general relation to it.’ ‘It expounds directly the effective *laws* of the divers observable phenomena, interior and exterior: that is to say, their constant relations of succession and of similitude, which allow our prevision of them the one from the other.’ ‘It abandons, as radically inaccessible and profoundly vain, all research into *causes* properly so called, first or final, of events of whatever kind.’ ‘In its theoretic conceptions it explains always the *how*, never the *why*.’ ‘The fundamental dogma of

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Introd. p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp. 12, 13.

the universal religion (*sic*) consists then in the proved existence of an immutable order to which all events of all kinds are submitted. This order is at once objective and subjective; in other words, it concerns equally the contemplated object and the contemplating subject. . . . All positive faith reposes then on this double harmony between subject and object<sup>1</sup>. It has been said that this order is subjective. In other words, 'the most conspicuous phenomena of intelligence and of sociability are constantly subject to invariable laws. Positivism,' adds Comte, 'is the direct result of this final discovery<sup>2</sup>.' If it is objected that this is unfavourable to activity, because it subordinates intelligence to inflexible destiny, it is replied that laws, although invariable, are yet 'essentially modifiable even by us<sup>3</sup>,' 'The fundamental conditions are always immutable; but the secondary dispositions of events can be modified, and that most frequently, by our intervention<sup>4</sup>.' 'Thus the order of nature constitutes a fate admitting of modification, becoming thence the basis of artificial order. Our true destiny consists, therefore, in resignation and activity<sup>5</sup>.' If it is again objected that such a faith as this offers, unlike all other religions, no direct stimulus to holy desires and affections, Comte replies that the objection starts with a conception of positivism as a philosophy, not as a religion. So long as positivism concerned itself with material order, and even vital order, alone, it was only equal to the development of the indispensable laws of our activity; it did not supply to us any direct object of permanent and com-

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, Introd. p. 14.<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 15.<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 16.<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 16.<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 16.



mon affection. As a religion, however, positivism has supplied this deficiency. And here is the consummation and glory of the faith:—it furnishes a being whom we may at once love, reverence, and worship, ‘a being immense and eternal, HUMANITY, whose sociological destinies are always developed under the necessary preponderance of cosmological and biological fatalities.’ The idea alone of such a being inspires directly the sacred formula of positivism, ‘Love for principle, Order for basis, and Progress for end.’ ‘L’amour pour principe, l’Ordre pour base, et le Progrès pour but.’ ‘Always founded on a free concourse of independent wills, its compound existence, since every discord tends to dissolve it, sanctions immediately the continuous preponderance of the heart over the mind, as the unique basis of our true unity. It is thus that the universal order is summed up henceforth in the being who ceaselessly studies and perfects it. The increasing struggle of humanity against the whole of the fatalities which govern it, presents,’ says our author, ‘to the heart and to the mind, a nobler spectacle than the necessarily capricious omnipotence of its theological precursor<sup>1</sup>.’ The God of theology, in a word, is not to be compared to the god of positivism.

Now the religion, thus sketched, is divided into dogma, cult, and régime, or *dogma*, *worship*, and *discipline*, which respectively concern our thoughts, our sentiments, and our acts<sup>2</sup>. Upon these we can only briefly touch. Our limits forbid all unnecessary detail.

1. Of *dogma*. The whole order of the universe

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, Introd. pp. 19, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 22.

resolves itself into two parts, viz. human order (*l'ordre humaine*) and exterior order (*l'ordre extérieur*)<sup>1</sup>. The latter subdivides itself again into material order and vital order. Human order, in its turn, subdivides itself into two species of order, social and moral<sup>2</sup>. What Comte calls 'vital order' is, however, a study, which, owing to the circumstance that man is an organized being, pertains in common to the study both of man and of the external world.

Now (1) the religious dogmas pertaining to the external world, or the *exterior order* of the universe, include mathematics, physics—the latter subdividing itself into astronomy, physics proper, and chemistry. Biology is an intermediate study. It points back on the one hand to chemistry and physics, and forwards on the other hand to sociology and morals. What religion there can be in mathematics and physics it would be difficult for any one but a positivist to discover. In fact, there is an utter impropriety in including the truths with which those sciences are versant among the dogmas of a religious belief. There is however, according to Comte, a continuity among these studies considered as so many stages in the progress of human thought. Mathematics leads, in the order of thought and of discovery, to astronomy, astronomy to physics, physics to chemistry, chemistry to biology, and biology to sociology and morals; so that there is a real affiliation of the later to the earlier of these studies. At the best, however, that conception of religion is ludicrous and grotesque which would make Euclid's *Elements* and Newton's *Principia* text-books of its distinctive

<sup>1</sup> *Catéchisme Positiviste*, Entret. iii. p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Entret. iv. p. 104.

dogmas. Comte appears to have felt this; for the greater part of his exposition of *dogma*, as it stands related to the exterior order of the universe, is employed upon the intermediate study of biology. First, Bichat's principle is laid down, that the noblest functions, even in man, repose always upon the grossest<sup>1</sup>. This is called the general law of real order. Thus animality (*animalité*) is totally subordinated to vegetality (*végétalité*); or the life of relation is subordinate, in other words, to that of nutrition. Next, it is affirmed that 'the whole of the vital functions repose on acts strongly analogous to chemical effects.' Life is first seen in the vegetable world, where inorganic materials are first developed into organic, and may be but the result of chemical combinations. The animal world as the superior, reposes, as we have seen, upon the vegetable as the inferior. Hence man is linked with the vegetable<sup>2</sup>, and morality with chemistry. 'Humanity constitutes, at its foundation, only the principal degree of animality; and so the highest notions of sociology, and even of morality, find of necessity in biology its first outline (*ébauche*) for truly philosophic minds which know how to apprehend them<sup>3</sup>.' It is this part of biology which lays the foundations of the life of nutrition, which, excluded from sociology, appertains to the exterior order of the universe, rather than to the interior order of the universe, or the order called human.

Through the laws of animal life, which Comte states in detail, we are brought by a gradual transition from the study of the external world to the study of man.

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, Entret. iii. p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 98.

Observe, then (2), the positivist dogma as it relates to *human order*. This order is twofold, social and moral. The first furnishes sociology; the second morals. Sociology is also twofold. It consists, first, of *social statics*, which constructs the theory of order; and, secondly, of social dynamics, which develops the doctrine of progress,—progress being defined as ‘the development of order<sup>1</sup>.’ Sociology requires that the supreme being, that is, Humanity, should be contemplated as being like the individual, only in a more pronounced degree. Humanity is, in a word, directed by sentiment, illumined by intelligence, and sustained by activity. Thence result three essential elements of social order—namely, what, with his characteristic jargon, Comte calls, (1) the affective sex; (2) the contemplative class; and (3) the practical force<sup>2</sup>. There are three social institutions representing these three elements—to wit, the Family, the Church, and the State; to which the respective centres are woman, the priesthood, and the patriariate<sup>3</sup>. The Family is founded solely on *love*, and is, as a society, the most limited and restricted, and lies at the basis of the other two; the Church binds us together by community of *faith*; while the State is established upon the principle of *activity*.

‘Cosmology first established the laws of matter; next, biology constructed on this basis the theory of vitality; finally, sociology subordinates to this double foundation the proper study of collective existence.’ And here comes in the distinction between sociology

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, Entret. iv. pp. 107, 108. ‘Le progrès est le développement de l’ordre.’

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 118.

and morals. For the former 'does not embrace all that constitutes human nature. It does not sufficiently estimate our principal attributes. It considers essentially in man intelligence and activity in combination with his inferior attributes, but without being subordinated to his dominant sentiments. The sentiments figure in sociology only as impulsions which they exert upon the life of the community—as modifications which they receive from it. Their proper laws can only be conveniently studied by morals. Sociology is the science of man taken collectively, especially in relation to his intelligence and activity. Morals is the science of individual man, especially in relation to his sentiments.'

Now the fundamental dogma of positivism is that of the subjection of all phenomena whatsoever to invariable laws. The resultant order throughout of the ensemble of real laws bears the general title of *destiny* or *hazard*, accordingly as they are *known* or *unknown*. Of laws there are three kinds; namely, (1) physical laws; (2) mental laws; and (3) moral laws<sup>1</sup>. All systematic unity depends on intellectual laws. Mental laws are distinguishable into static and dynamic, accordingly as they concern the immutable dispositions or the essential variations of the corresponding object. The static study precedes the dynamic; for it is necessary to have determined the fundamental conditions of each existence before estimating its different successive states. The static law consists essentially in the subordination of our subjective constructions to our objective materials. 'Our principal theoretic merit,' writes Comte, 'consists in perfecting

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 40.

sufficiently this natural subordination of man to the world, in order that our brain may become the faithful mirror of exterior order,—the future results of which may thence be prevised from our interior operations<sup>1</sup>. Thus positivism, by studying the laws, hits upon the middle way between mysticism, which penetrates to causes, and empiricism, which limits itself to facts; as also between idiotism (so-called) or excess of objectivity, and folly or excess of subjectivity<sup>2</sup>. The dynamic law, or the law of the three estates (*loi de trois états*), consists in the necessary passage of every theoretic conception through three successive stages or conditions; the first theological or fictitious, the second metaphysical or abstract, and the third positive or real. The first stage is always provisional, the second purely transitional, and the last is alone definitive. The last differs from the other two chiefly in its substitution of the relative for the absolute, and in its study of the laws by which it replaces finally the investigation of causes<sup>3</sup>. Our first hypotheses are always purely spontaneous, and therefore fictitious, and equal an excess of subjectivity. It is a law of our mental nature that it have such an initiative. ‘All sound logic is reducible to this sole rule:—to form always the simplest hypothesis compatible with the ensemble of informations obtained.’ The first theologues and fetishists applied this rule. Proposing an investigation of causes, they limited themselves to explaining the world by man,—the sole possible source of all theoretic unity, by attributing all phenomena to superhuman wills. Ontology or metaphysics dissolved theology without

<sup>1</sup> *Catéchisme Positiviste*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 46, 47.

creating a substitute. It was thus purely transitional. The true substitute for theology is however found. It is positivism;—positivism, with its contempt of causes, whether first causes or final causes; with its humanitarian god—a god partly dead and partly living, and in part yet to live; with its modifiable fate, and with its sedulous temporalism, its concern only to cognize the life of flesh.

To return to moral science. Comte defines it as the science of individual man. But the whole of human existence has generally been distinguished into *sentiment*, *intelligence*, and *activity*, a division which has been empirically completed by the classification of our prepossessions into those which are *personal* and those which are *social*<sup>1</sup>. Here we have the natural domain of morals. St. Paul sketched the whole problem of morals, both theoretical and practical, when he constructed his doctrine of the permanent struggle between nature and grace<sup>2</sup>. But in what sense does Comte make this concession? We shall see. The principles of human nature have been divided into those of intelligence, sentiment, and activity, and also into those which are personal and those which are social. We have also seen that they may, taken from another point of view, be classed as statical and dynamical.

Now, says Comte, in order to institute in the domain of morals a general harmony between the static and the dynamic in our constitution, it is necessary to assign their seats to our principal functions. Here comes in the phrenological department of moral science, and, if we are not much mistaken, it will be found, not

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 126.

that morals absorbs phrenology, but, contrariwise, that phrenology absorbs, in Comte's system, not only morals, but also psychology. Not, however, to be too precipitate, let us see what constitutes 'the positive theory of human nature.' Gall's doctrines are adopted as its basis. He established the existence of two principles, the one static and the other dynamic,—the natural connection of which served as the foundation of the true study of the soul and the brain. He further established the plurality of our higher functions, both mental and moral,—their common residence in the organs of the cerebrum, the diverse regions of which corresponded to the real distinctions of mind and morality. Gall's chief faults were, (1) superficial analysis; and (2) his empiric localization of bumps<sup>1</sup>. Notwithstanding its faults, its general principles were, according to Comte, correct, in that it furnished with sufficient accuracy 'the general decomposition of our existence.' 'The fictitious strife,' adds Comte, 'between nature and grace was thenceforward [i. e. from the time of Gall's discoveries] replaced by the real opposition between the posterior mass of the brain, where the personal instincts reside, and the anterior region, where are distinctly seated the sympathetic impulses and intellectual faculties. . . . Such is the indestructible basis on which the founder of the positive religion constructed accordingly the systematic theory of the brain and of the soul, when he had instituted sociology, whence alone could emanate suitable inspiration<sup>2</sup>.' As a further expansion of this cerebral theory, it is said :—'The speculative and active regions of the brain alone have nervous com-

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, pp. 128, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 129.



munications with the senses and with the muscles in order to the perception and modification of the external world. On the contrary, the affective region, which constitutes its principal mass, has no direct lien with the world without—"n'a point de liens directes avec le dehors," to which its proper relations with intelligence and activity avail indirectly to connect it. But, besides these cerebral liaisons, the special nerves connect it profoundly with the principal organs of the nutritive life,—from the necessary subordination of the whole of the personal instincts to the vegetative existence.' Thus 'the most powerful means are furnished for perfecting the physical and the moral in man.' So much for the theory of human nature. Into the details of Comte's Systematic Tableau of the Soul, as he calls it, or the positivist classification of the eighteen interior functions of the brain, we forbear to enter. Suffice it to say, that all this phrenological medley, incongruous as it may seem, is strictly relevant to the matter in hand. Positivism bases morality on biology and sociology. In fact, its theory of morality is but the bumpology of Gall *rechauffé*. The brain is the positivist's Bible; it is the inalterable book which never deceives<sup>1</sup>. It is the brain which determines character. The preponderance of selfishness over the sympathetic affections is not the man's own fault. It is his misfortune. For it is due solely to the preponderant influence of the posterior over the anterior mass of the brain. The strife between nature and grace is a fiction. The true strife is between the posterior and anterior lobes of the brain. Man's moral improvement is, therefore, to be sought through physical improve-

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 141.

ment—through a better craniological and cerebral development. In a well-developed cerebrum are to be found all the principles and impulses of a virtuous and a holy life; and to it the positivist points with triumph as demonstrating the existence in man, in the teeth of every theological dogma to the contrary, of disinterested benevolence and virtuous pre-pensities<sup>1</sup>.

As to morality, properly so called, it is to be sought for in vain in his exposition of religion. For what are, summarily speaking, its dogmas? (1) It rejects all investigation of essences and causes as vain, frivolous, and unprofitable. (2) It reprobates all but relative knowledge. It does not say that there exists an objective universe, nor that there is a subjective per-cipient mind distinct therefrom. It considers the universe and man as forming one whole. Neither, again, does it consider man's soul apart from his body. It speaks neither of matter nor of spirit. It only knows what we call spirit and what we call matter in union the one with the other. Its concern is only with phenomena, not with essences. (3) It substitutes for the investigation of causes and essences, the investigation of phenomena and their laws; and because it adds to the mere consideration of phenomena the consideration also of the so-called laws regulating those phenomena, it lays claim to being something better than mere empiricism. That claim, however, no student of philosophy will allow to be other than vain and worthless.

So far there is no essential difference between the philosophy of Comte and that of Protagoras. (4) Posi-

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 144.

tivism rejects all belief in the supernatural. (5) It substitutes in the place of a Divine Being the conception of Humanity. Humanity in its entirety is its god, or rather goddess. To her all duties are due; to her the positivist devotee addresses his prayers and adorations. And this goddess consists, according to its compound nature, partly of the dead, partly of the living, and in part of those who are yet unborn. Insane concoction! Ludicrous conceit! Here is excess of subjectivity, if you will.

(6) Positivism extends the domain of invariable laws to the domain of the mind and of morals, and thus, for all practical purposes, overturns the freedom of the will. The mind cannot, he says, refuse assent to demonstration. No one can refuse belief to opinions independently accredited, unless preoccupied by another contrary belief. There could be no moral order if each could hate where he ought to love, or reciprocally. Liberty consists in following, without impediments, the laws proper to the case in question. A man shows his liberty, for example, when he has stumbled by falling to the earth; for, in so doing, he follows the impulsion of the law of gravitation<sup>1</sup>. This is Comte's own illustration.

Here, then, is fatalism in morals. And how can it be otherwise? Does not all evil arise from malorganization or, at least, defective organization of the brain? And if so, can a healthy man help doing right? Can he get foul of the laws of his nature? And, upon the other hand, can a man with excessive or defective cerebral organization, an unhealthy man, help doing

<sup>1</sup> *Catéchisme Positiviste*, pp. 105, 106,

wrong? It is vain to talk of free-will and responsibility with such doctrines as these. (7) Apropos of these laws, which dominate as much over mind as over matter, positivism has made a capital discovery—to wit, that the mental evolution of every man, and therefore of all men taken collectively, passes necessarily through three stages, termed respectively the supernatural, the metaphysical, and finally the positivist stages. In the first period of mental development he explains phenomena by supposing the existence of supernatural beings. The lightning, the pestilence, the earthquake are traced to a Divine cause. In the second he explains phenomena by means of abstractions, as, for example, that nature abhors a vacuum. In the third and last stage he limits himself rigidly to the explication of phenomena by means of invariable laws. He rejects the theological fancies of the world's infancy; he rejects the speculations of ontology, and concerns himself in no wise with the *substrata* underlying phenomena—with matter as such, or with mind as such, but only with phenomena and their laws. The only sphere for positivism is, therefore, this present fleshly life. It has no god, no hereafter; phenomena, but no causes of phenomena; laws, but no lawgiver. The sole object of human life is the continuous, ceaseless, perpetual improvement of humanity, which is no sooner improved than it expires, and is no more.

Thus much for the positivist *dogma*. Besides this, however, positivism presents us with a cult or worship, and a régime or discipline.

II. Now, as to the positivist *worship*, the briefest possible notice must here suffice. What is there to worship? it may be asked. The centre of the positivist

cult is its goddess HUMANITY. But this is not a single, but a compound being. Precisely so. And hence arises the characteristic feature of positivist worship. For it consists essentially in a sort of rapt contemplation of the virtues, glories, and excellencies of the illustrious dead<sup>1</sup>. It consists thus in *the idealization of régime*<sup>2</sup>, or the picturing to the mind of things, not as they are, but as they ought to be. Thus, by this hero-worship, this devout meditation on the lives and characters of the departed, we do in reality prolong their existences. They thus continue to live within us; and this is their athanasia, their immortality. But this positivist worship has a rule determining it. Each worshipper is to fix precisely in his own mind, first the place, next the seat or attitude, and lastly the costume proper to each object of his adoration.

Fancy top-boots, chignons, or powdered wigs as objects (since they come under costume) of sacred, nay, of religious and adoring contemplation<sup>3</sup>! Truly positivism has found a substitute for theology. But how if our heroes are found faulty and imperfect, are they not thereby rendered unsuitable objects of religious devotion? Certainly not. Here is scope for our activity. Our active powers are to participate in our acts of adoration. We are, in brief, to idealize our heroes by subtraction, and sometimes, but rarely, by addition<sup>4</sup>. The positivist goddess, when she incorporates the dead [pure nonsense], strikes out the imperfections which always tarnished their objective life. Hence in worship the positivist devotee subtracts from his objects of Divine worship the imperfections which, when these

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 145.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp. 167, 168.

lesser gods were like ourselves but man, marred the symmetry of their lives. And it is also lawful to him to add secondary perfections, graces, and embellishments, just as a skilful painter would, while remaining faithful to the original, add touches of beauty and lines of grace from the riches of his own nature, such as probably never at any time pertained to the object whose chief features he sought to reproduce. Strange to say, too, in this cult or worship *prayer* is said to have a place. 'To pray,' says Comte, 'is at once to love, to think, and to act<sup>1</sup>.' Such is his definition. Hence the positivist may pray. But when he prays, he prays not because he thinks his prayers are heard and answered (for who is there to hear and answer them?), but solely in order to expand his better affections<sup>2</sup>. His prayers are in fact the measure of his development. For he can only ask for degrees of progress to which, as his very asking shows, he has already attained.

But this worse than fetish faith, which worships dead men and prays for praying's sake to the phantoms of its own memory and imagination, has also, as if in pitiable mimicry of true religion, its guardian angels<sup>3</sup>; its sacraments<sup>3</sup>—not two, nor seven, but nine in number; its ecclesiastico-positivist calendar, with its diurnal, weekly, and monthly celebrations<sup>4</sup>. But what are these 'guardian angels' of positivism? To descend from poetry to prose, they are simply a man's own wife and daughters. Woman figures conspicuously in this new religion. Humanity is called a goddess, and cannot be worthily conceived otherwise than under the female form<sup>5</sup>. Thus Mariolatry is, according to Comte, one

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 184, 185.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 193.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp. 208-226.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 184-207.

of the best features in Roman Catholicism. Woman stands as the centre of the family circle, she constitutes the affective sex, and as spouse, wife, and daughter rules as the representative and minister of the great goddess Humanity over the hearts of men, raising them to a nobler and happier existence, by gradually causing their love of society to prevail over their love of self. Hence women are guardian angels, especially those of them who are spouses, wives, or daughters; and, as such, are to be worshipped, and invoked at least three times each day<sup>1</sup>.

Equally fantastic are the daily, weekly, and monthly celebrations, and the nine sacramental rites. Thus one month is set apart to the devout contemplation of humanity, a second to that of marriage, a third to that of paternity, a fourth to that of filiation, a fifth to that of fraternity, a sixth to that of domesticity, a seventh to that of fetishism, an eighth to that of polytheism, a ninth to that of monotheism, a tenth to that of woman (or moral providence), an eleventh to that of the priesthood (or intellectual providence), a twelfth to that of the patriciate (or material providence), and a thirteenth to that of the proletariat (or general providence).

So much for the cult or worship of positivism. To state it is to refute it. Surely such a faith as this is little likely to serve man in the harsh, stern experiences through which he is called to pass. In his hour of extreme sorrow and tribulation, in his crises of being when temporal succours have quite forsaken him, and above all in the solemn article of death, what helps can such a maudlin faith afford? It may be a very nice

<sup>1</sup> *Catéchisme Positiviste*, pp. 186-189.

religion for dabblers and dilettanti, by which to while away their lagging leisure. But it is not a religion for the hard-working, horny-handed sons of toil, for men familiarized with tribulation, for those to whom life shows only its darker and sadder side.

III. But now one word, in conclusion, as to the positivist *régime* or *discipline*. The professed object of the positivist régime is 'the construction of the general rules which ought to dominate over human acts, both ordinary and exceptional<sup>1</sup>.' First of all, Comte lays down rules for the conduct of male and female education. The whole of the rules for the regulation of practice contemplate a twofold aim—namely, to enable each individual to direct his own conduct, and also to judge of the conduct of others<sup>2</sup>. But how are these rules to be enforced? There are two general modes of spiritual discipline, the one direct, the other indirect. By the first the positivist priest seeks to persuade the culpable, and reform him by bringing to bear upon his heart and mind suitable inducements to amendment. By the other, to which recourse is only had when the direct method has failed, the priest employs his powers of excommunication, to which there pertain three degrees. But should both these methods fail, how then? In that case it is impossible to dispense with legislation, properly so called. And here is the radical and incurable weakness of positivism. 'In effect,' writes Comte, 'legislation, properly so called, will always remain necessary in order to supply the inadequacy of simple morality to the more urgent social necessities. Conscience and opinion must frequently be impotent against daily delinquencies, if the temporal

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 252.



power does not apply physical repression to the most flagrant instances. . . . There exist, in fact, in our species, as in others, individuals radically vicious, who are neither capable nor deserving of any true correction<sup>1</sup>. Such are, of course, the proper objects of political penalties. But here two things are observable, namely (1), that morality in the Comtean system loses itself in politics or jurisprudence, when anything like effective discipline is in question; and (2) that this ultimate resource is denied to the system in ninety per cent. of the cases in which moral discipline is requisite. The limits which separate jurisprudence from morals are clearly and boldly defined; and it may be laid down as a rule that to the immense majority of cases of moral delinquency human legislation is utterly incompetent to reach.

Positivism may recommend altruism<sup>2</sup>, may require the individual to subordinate his lower, his nutritive nature, to his higher intellectual and moral being<sup>3</sup>; and this it may require too in spite of its doctrine of biological and moral fate. It may set up a Platonic theory of marriage, and views of its own as to divorce and widowhood<sup>4</sup>. It may propound that governments should provide for widows left destitute, and that females should be exempt from social labour, and that they should voluntarily refuse to inherit property, because riches are prejudicial to their moral pre-eminence<sup>5</sup>. Positivism may insist on domestic purity as the basis of social and political morality<sup>6</sup>. It may theorize on what it considers to be the normal constitution of modern industry, basing it upon the division of wealth

<sup>1</sup> Catéchisme Positiviste, pp. 258, 259.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* 271-274.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 276-280.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* 284, 285.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* 292.

between capitalists and labourers, the hierarchy of the patriciate, and the subordination of rural districts to the towns<sup>1</sup>. It may announce its own favourite dogmas with regard to the general rules which ought to regulate the transmission of wealth<sup>2</sup>. It may posit these and many other doctrines as elements of its moral creed.

Nay, it may do much more than this. It may create a spiritual corporation, with its high priest, its national superiors, its suppliants, and its aspirates; and through such hierarchy it may admonish, and even excommunicate. Nay, even were the vain dream of positivism realized, enabling it to extend its dominion to the ends of the earth, so that, like the sanguinary Catholicism of the middle ages, it could call in the temporal power to sanction its behests,—even then it would be, as a moral régime, an egregious and hopeless failure.

A system which, like Comtism, gets rid of God, ought at least to find a worthy substitute. But this has not been accomplished.

Where is the moral law of positivism? And what is its morality? The essence of its morality is altruism. But even this is not a principle distinctive of the system. Our blessed Redeemer has long since taught us to ‘do unto others as we would that they should do unto us:’ and again, that we should ‘love our neighbour as ourselves’ is a principle of morality as old as the world. But even supposing that this positivist altruism had been for the first time given forth to mankind, it must still constitute but a very small part of the sum total of what a moral system ought to promulgate. But fragment as it is, it is much, very much more than positivism can duly enforce. We

<sup>1</sup> *Catéchisme Positiviste*, pp. 298, 299.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 302.

have asked above, where the moral law of positivism is to be found. And we ask it again. And we affirm, without fear of contradiction, that in this new system it has absolutely no existence. It has no moral law. It is not enough to point to the cerebrum and tell us that it affords us indubitable proofs of the existence within us of benevolent impulses; and that therefore altruism is a law of our nature. For it would be equally possible to point to other similar proofs of the existence within us of selfish propensities; and, *pari passu*, if altruism is a law of our nature, so also is egoism, selfism, or selfishness. Here, in fact, there is no such thing as law at all; but, if man's spirit is the result of organization, though there may not be law, there is fate. And before fatalism, morality disappears. The only approach to law in this miserable system of atheistic idolatry, is to be found in the rules which it may be able to enforce, either, first, through its ecclesiastical sanctions, or else, secondly, through the superadded sanctions of the state, which in the ultimate issue Comte admits to be indispensable.

But are these rules, thus enforced, moral laws? God forbid. They contain not, as such, one single moral element. They are the mere statutes of an ecclesiastical corporation or of a state assembly. They are not laws for the conscience.

It may be said the acts and forbearances thus enforced are moral acts and forbearances—are, that is, right acts and forbearances. But such language implies, either a moral norm to which the acts and forbearances are referred antecedently to all human legislation, and in virtue of which alone they are moral or right, or it implies a *petitio principii*.

But finally, morality is as much interior as exterior, and it is as much morality in the dark as in the daylight. Human legislation, however, even supposing that it could create moral laws, moral obligations, and moral sanctions, which it certainly can *not*, reaches at best only to the outer life, and even to the outer life only in so far as that outer life is open to its cognizance. Many overt acts, not to name multitudinous acts of the inner life, entirely escape its vigilance; and human government may be, as it is daily, cheated to its very face in open day by those who are sufficiently skilled to do their evil deeds in due form of law.

What then is that system worth which has no true morality, no true moral law, and which is driven in the last resort in the enforcement of what it lays down as laws of conduct to the employment of state legislation—a legislation which reaches only in its cognizance to overt acts, and those only even of these which it has been able to detect and establish (when detected) by satisfactory legal evidence?

Here then we have another proof that true atheism, and true morality, and moral government are radically and in essence incompatible the one with the other. And hence Lord Bacon has well said, that ‘a little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion<sup>1</sup>.’

<sup>1</sup> Essay XVI. p. 47 Bohn’s edition.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SYSTEMS OF PANTHEISM IN THEIR RELATION TO ETHICAL INQUIRY.

HAVING in our last chapter passed in review the chief forms of atheism, we may here briefly complete the survey of errors in relation to theistic beliefs as they affect morality, by a rapid *ébauche* of the pantheistic systems of modern Europe.

A clear belief in the personality of God is necessary to true morality. That we have already demonstrated. If such belief is totally rejected, it leads by consequence to the rejection of true morals: if it is obscuredly conceived, a similar and correspondent result is impressed upon a man's moral convictions. As Neander has well said, 'It is impossible to be in theory an Epicurean, and in praxis a Stoic; in metaphysics a pantheist, and in ethics a theist<sup>1</sup>.'

To commence then with Benedict Spinoza, the father of the naturalism of modern times. According to Spinoza, God as the one eternally existent *substance* (*substantia*), has two fundamental attributes, as such,

<sup>1</sup> Geschichte der christlichen Ethik, Einleit. § 2; herausg. von Dr. David Erdmann. Berlin, 1864.

namely *extension* and *cogitation*<sup>1</sup>. He is not conceived of as having the world outside Himself and distinct from Himself; but the world is treated as being a phase of the Divine existence. In the nature of things, besides substances and their modes there is nothing—‘in rerum natura præter substantias earumque modos nihil dari<sup>2</sup>.’ All individual finite existences are thus but *modi* of the existence of God. As he remarks in his ‘Ethics,’ ‘besides God no substance can be given or conceived<sup>3</sup>.’ Hence man is but a *modus* of the Divine nature, according to the universal principle that ‘omnia sunt ex necessitate naturæ divinæ determinata’—all things are determined by necessity of the Divine nature<sup>4</sup>. Hence determinism—absolute and total determinism. For human thought is as necessarily determined as is human existence. Thought has two sides—perception or knowledge, and volition. These can never contradict each other, but are in their operation actually and necessarily one. Every act of volition has a determinate cause which effects, and effects it absolutely. The freedom of the will is treated as worse than a fiction, since it is absurd.

But how is this reconciled with the imperative character of moral law? It is not reconciled with any such fact, inasmuch as the fact itself is denied. Spinoza affects to treat of human actions and human morality as a mathematician might treat of lines, superficies, and figures. Hence, in the Spinozan ethics,

<sup>1</sup> Opera Omnia, ed. Bruder, vol. i. p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. Cogitat. Metaph. App. Pt. II. cap. i. § 1; Opera, vol. i. p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Ethics, Pt. I. Prop. xiv.; Opera Omnia, vol. i. p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Pt. I. Prop. xxix.; Opera Omnia, vol. i. p. 211.

the distinction between good and bad disappears. Good and bad are nothing actual in the things themselves; but only subjective presentations or concepts which he forms by comparison, only relative relations, mere modi of human thought. A particular piece of music may be good to a hypochondriac, and not good for a second subject, while to the deaf subject it is simply nil<sup>1</sup>. In itself, therefore, it is neither good nor bad. Even the stings of conscience are a self-deception, or at the best nothing more than a sadness, which we feel over whatever has proved abortive. *Virtue* is the ability to do whatever answers to the laws of our nature<sup>2</sup>. *Sin* is possible only in the State, in which case it consists in disobedience to civil law<sup>3</sup>. *Sympathy* is irrational, and in many cases pernicious<sup>4</sup>; as also are *humility*<sup>5</sup> and *repentance*<sup>6</sup>. Such were, in brief, the ethics of Spinoza, which, starting with pantheism, terminated in determinism or moral fate. Suffice it to say, that the influence of Spinoza upon subsequent theological and ethical speculation was, at least in Germany, very great.

Preparatorily to the consideration of the pantheistic systems of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Schleiermacher, it will be desirable to notice briefly the position taken up by Kant, although Kant was neither an atheist nor a pantheist. In his critical philosophy, Kant aimed a blow at the scepticism of Hume and at empiricism

<sup>1</sup> *Ethics*, Pt. IV. Præf.; *Opera*, vol. i. p. 331, Bruder.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Pt. IV. Def. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Pt. IV. 37, Schol. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Pt. IV. Prop. li. 'Commiseratio in homine . . . . per se mala et inutilis est.'

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Pt. IV. Prop. liii. 'Humilitas virtus non est, sive ex ratione non oritur.'

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* Pt. IV. Prop. liv.

in general. In his critique of Pure Reason he described the formal thought—the logic of the speculative reason in the province of knowledge. This done, he sought to attain a science of the actual in the province of the practical reason, or in other words, in the province of morals. By the reason (*die Vernunft*) he understood not merely a cognositive but also a volitional faculty. It furnishes not merely a rational knowledge of what is, as the theoretic or pure reason; but also a knowledge of what through rational volition ought to be, as the practical reason. The pure reason seeks the rational origin and basis of whatever is actual; the practical reason, upon the contrary, contemplates the end or destination of the actual.

Man, as spirit, can set before him an end, destination, or object (*Zweck*) of action; but as a rational spirit he ought to set before him only a rational and absolutely valid object. But here, since he is impelled within a province wholly of his own determination, he is only dependent upon himself. In volition and in action he is free. A rational object is an object such as must be recognised by every rational man as individually his own. For reason is not a merely individual thing, but is common to all men alike. The rationality or reasonableness of the object reposes therefore upon its universal validity.

The highest principle of all moral law is, says Kant, the law:—‘Act so that the maxims of thine action may be worthy of becoming a universal law for all men <sup>1</sup>.’

A maxim is a subjective principle of moral action, in contradistinction to an objectively valid law.

Obligation to moral action lies, according to Kant,

<sup>1</sup> *Metaphysik der Sitten*, c. ii.



absolutely in the reason itself, and is wholly unconditioned. If a man acts otherwise than as he ought, it is because he is not reasonable. This law of reason is the 'categorical imperative.'

Here is the deathblow to eudæmonism. A man has not to consult his happiness, or his pleasure, or his well-being, but only the law of his reason. But the result is dearly purchased. For morality is regarded as being wholly and absolutely subjective to such an extent that it does not admit of being posited objectively as *law*.

As to freedom, the moral reason is only then truly free, when it has and makes, independently of all conditions other than those which it carries within itself, the law and basis of impulsion of all moral action. This is the 'autonomy' of the will. It is reason, and not feeling, which directly moves the will<sup>1</sup>.

Manifestly, therefore, in Kant's system morality reposes on nothing save the categorical requirement of the reason. Morality, in this conception of it, has no need of religion, since it has no object or basis of propulsion outside itself. The moral *idée* reposes not upon religion, but, conversely, religion reposes upon the absolute moral *idée*. Such was the condition in which Kant left ethical science. He had totally subjectivized morality; so much so, that the existence of a life in which man may realize the highest 'good' is treated as incapable of proof, and as credible chiefly upon the ground that it is 'a postulate of the practical reason<sup>2</sup>.'

Following upon Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte erected

<sup>1</sup> Grundlegung, II. Abschnitt, 71; III. Abschnitt, 78.

<sup>2</sup> Kritik der Prakt. Vern., I. Theil, Buch II. 2. Hauptst. § 4.

his system of absolute idealism and of idealistic morality. Kant had denied to pure reason all objective knowledge; and had also derived the validity of the law of reason (another name for the law of morality) from the moral subject himself. Similarly, Fichte made the value of the individual subject the ego absolute, and posited all objective existence as the non-ego (*nicht-ich*), basing absolutely upon the individual ego (*auf das individuelle ich*) all knowledge and volition.

The ego sets itself as determined through the non-ego—that is, becomes cognoscitive; the ego again, on the other hand, sets itself as determining—that is, becomes volitional. Both these are but two sides of one and the same thing, since the non-ego, in its entire essence, has existence only as it is posited through the ego, so that, properly speaking, the ego is its own object. The ego must, in all its determinations, be posited only through itself, and must be in absolute independence of any objective non-ego.

Only in *volition*, which is the non-ego absolutely determining the ego, is it free and independent. In freedom, in volition, man is rational; and while he determines his freedom as absolutely independent—affirms his freedom—he is moral. Morality is thus the determination of oneself to freedom. Man must act freely in order that he may be free; that is, he must act with the consciousness of his absolutely independent self-determination.

The formal principle of morals is thus:—‘Act according to thy conscience;’ or, ‘Act always according to the best conviction of thy duty.’

The material principle of morals is:—‘Make thyself independent or free.’ ‘I must be an independent ego,

this is my final aim; and that of things, is, that I should employ them in order to further my independence.'

Manifestly this is but morality in name. Man must be already free before he can become moral. But freedom is, when attained, only the formal condition, not the substance of morality.

In another place he says that 'the creative formula of, or the collective whole of, moral science is—The ego must manifest itself as thoroughly and absolutely no other than the life of the absolute idea, in virtue of which our knowledge attains its highest simplicity <sup>1</sup>.'

This savours strongly of Brahminism; and in 1807, five years prior to the date of the above citation, Fichte had laid down, as the aim of morality, perfect self-annihilation; not in any Christian sense of the term as that of self-denial, but rather in the sense of the Indian moralists.

That the system is essentially deterministic, appears from his remarks upon the terms moral science and *duty*. That which has hitherto been termed *Sittenlehre*, is now, he says, changed into *Seinslehre* <sup>2</sup>. That is to say, the science which had hitherto been concerned with what *ought to be*, is now changed, metamorphosed by idealism, into a science which is concerned only with what *is*. Similarly of duty. 'Whatever,' he writes, 'is revealed to the ego as that which must be, is denominated *duty* <sup>3</sup>.' Some have denominated this idealism as atheistic. Fichte, however, would allow a consciousness of God; but the God would be simply the creation of the ego, since all objective resistance, or the non-ego, is but a projection of the former.

<sup>1</sup> System der Sittenlehre, 37.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 39.

Schelling, passing out of idealism into pantheism, and thence again into a dualistic theosophy<sup>1</sup>, sought in this his third period of development to reconcile the freedom of the individual with the necessity at the same time of evil. He held that in God there are two natures. Upon the one hand, there is His eternal basis—a nature destitute in itself of understanding. Out of this in eternity there arose, as its eternal antithesis, the Divine understanding. Similarly, in every man there exists a twofold element: one a principle dark as to its nature, and corresponding to the irrational, non-understanding nature in God; the other, the principle of light, or of the understanding.

While in God (such is Schelling's theosophy) both principles are inseparably bound together, in man they are separable—that is to say, man knows the possibility of good and of evil. The dark principle, as self-hood, can be separated from the principle of light. The individual will can strive to be, as individual will, that which it is only when in union with the universal will. It may strive to be in the periphery, or, in other words, as creature, that which it is only when it remains in the Divine centre. This separation of self-hood from the light is *evil*. *Evil*, moreover, considered as the separation of the two principles, is necessary in order to the revelation of the character of God to man. For while the two principles of light and of darkness remained as undivided and unseparated in man as they are in God, there would be no difference between man and God; and, from lack of this difference, God could not reveal His omnipotence and

<sup>1</sup> Philos. Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit, 1809.

His love. But that He should do this was absolutely a *necessity*.

Hence arises Schelling's doctrine of the universal necessity of sin; which however, singularly enough, does not cease, upon that account, to be man's fault. Sin is necessary, and yet sin is culpable. It is culpable in man, since the dark principle of his dualistic nature does not perfect evil as such, but only goads, and stimulates, and excites to evil. But here comes in another peculiar doctrine of Schelling's philosophy—to wit, his doctrine of man's pre-existence.

All the actions of man in *time* follow, he admits, and that, of necessity, out of his nature and essence. But then the sin of man is that he has such an essence, since, in his pre-existent life—a life coinciding in its commencement with the creation—man of his own will determined that essence or nature. Man is certainly born in time; but he has, notwithstanding, determined his present nature and life in a pre-temporal state, or, in brief, in a past eternity.

Hence our actions are, upon the one hand, necessary; upon the other hand, responsible. Responsible, as related to the foregone eternity; necessary, as related only to the present period of time. Thus the betrayal by Judas of our Lord was absolutely necessary, and yet also culpable. As every man now acts, so also has he acted from all eternity. He formed his true character in another state. All men have from eternity determined themselves upon individuality and self-hood, and are born into the world with this their nature as it is formed by the principle of darkness.

But although this is the case, it ought not, he holds, to continue so. *Evil* ought not to remain,

but ought rather to be overcome by the principle of good<sup>1</sup>.

Such was, in outline, the latest presentation of the philosophy of Schelling as it concerned the questions of ethical science. Derived in great part from Jacob Böhme and Francis Baader, this grotesque theosophy of Schelling was in reality a modified form of the old dualism of the Egyptians and Assyrians. What Osiris was to Typhon, that Schelling's principle of light is to his principle of darkness. And this system, fantastic as it is, is more nearly related, than might at first sight be supposed, to his idealistic philosophy. Thus, while with Fichte the ego (*das Ich*), the first principle of all things, was the human soul; with Schelling the first principle of all things was the ABSOLUTE. With Fichte the ego was personal; with Schelling the ego, which was also the absolute, was impersonal. But this impersonal absolute was an activity, and, as an activity, it might by a creative effort become personal. This is the transition of nature into intelligence. Hence arises a dualism. The absolute *One* becomes dual. As unconscious, it is nature; as conscious, it is intelligence. In this way nature, or the unconscious absolute, is enabled to reflect itself, to become its own object. Thus object and subject are identical. But God, as merely conscious intelligence, is unaware of this identity; and hence a dual antagonism. But in *reason*—the reason of man (for it is only through man as an organ that God can attain to reason), this identity of subject and object is realized. It is 'the total indifference of subject and object'<sup>2</sup>, since through reason

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Christliche Sittenlehre*, Bd. I. 270-272.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ich nenne Vernunft, die absolute Vernunft, oder die Ver-

the phenomenal difference between subject and object disappears. Reason thus sees and embraces the All<sup>1</sup>. In fact in reason, thought and existence are one, and reason is but the absolute knowing itself<sup>2</sup>. And this is the regress of the finite into the infinite.

Here there is manifestly the Gnostic germ of that dualistic theosophy which he afterwards more fully developed in his philosophical investigations into the nature of human freedom.

Into the system of Schleiermacher, after what has been said in the earlier pages of this essay, it is unnecessary here to enter. We may proceed, therefore, at once to a brief and concise notice of the ethical bearings of the philosophy of Hegel.

What Hegel has written upon ethics appears only as the philosophy of right (*Rechtslehre*), as a department of his philosophy of the spirit.

The rational spirit as the unity of the objective consciousness and the subjective consciousness or self-consciousness, is the spirit become truly free. It knows all in itself and itself in all; it is as reason the identity of the objective All with the ego, or the identity of object and subject. While the rational spirit recognises nature as the objective reason, the spirit is *theoretic*. But the reason knows also its own contents as its object, and objectivizes them, sets them outside itself; that is to say, the reason is *practical*, is *volitional*. Now in as far as reason in this volition

nunft, insofern sie als totale Indifferenz des Subjectiven und Objectiven gedacht wird.'—*Zeitschr. für Speculat. Physik*, II. Bd. 2. Heft. Cf. Fichte, *Nachgelassene Werke*, Bd. iii. 371.

<sup>1</sup> 'Ausser der Vernunft is Nichts, und in ihr ist Alles.'—*Ibid.* 373.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 375.

is determined by nothing alien from itself, it is free. The spirit thus sets itself outside itself—objectivizes itself in freedom: and for the spirit thus to actualize itself in objective modes is to realize freedom. This its actualization of itself, however, is *not* nature: but is essentially spiritual. It is an actualization of a spiritual world, a kingdom of the spirit, an objective world, an objective kingdom; of which the free rational spirit is the creator. The spirit thus objectivized furnishes the world of history in its largest and widest sense.

But the freedom here spoken of is manifestly not the freedom of choice—the freedom of volition with which ethics is concerned. It is freedom only in a pantheistic, idealistic sense. It is simply ‘non-dependence on another, the relation of self to itself’ (*das Nichtabhängigsein von einem andern, das Sichaufsichselbstbeziehen*). But that it should do this is necessary to its being. Hence this liberty, this freedom, is but one and the same with necessity. Thus the actuality of freedom appears essentially under the form of necessity or fate as the *right*, which upon the side of the subject constitutes also *duty*.

Now the philosophy of right divides itself into three parts:—

1. The department of *formal, abstract* right.

This, which related originally to property, comes to be recognised through law. Individual freedom is in this department coerced, regulated, harmonized with the freedom of other individual wills by *law*.

2. The department of morality.

In this department the individual will is brought into harmony with the universal will, not as in the pre-



ceding department by coercion of law, but upon the basis of freedom a man may be compelled to the right, but not to the moral. Only free, willing action is moral. What would be illegal in the province of right, would be guilt in that of morality. The *good*, as the unity of the particular will of the individual, subjects the ideal rational will. Whatever is reasonable is good; and that all men should will rationally is the world's end and aim. To perfect the good is *duty*, the duty of each individual.

Abstract right is, as we have seen, merely exterior and formal: morality is also merely interior and subjective, and contemplates the harmony of what is and what ought to be only as a postulate, as a *sollen*. In morality good exists only as thought, as idea. Hence the need of a third stage in which the moral and the actual shall be one.

3. The department of what for distinction's sake may be termed ethopraxis.

Hegel employs the term *Sittlichkeit* as contrasted with *Moralität*. Here the good has attained actuality. In the province of morality man was treated as an individual: in that of ethopraxis he is essentially a member of a moral communion. The aim of ethopraxis in like manner contemplates directly not the individual, but the moral whole. The commonwealth, that is to say the reason become objective, develops itself in three degree, viz. the family, the civic communion, and the *state*, in which last the perfect actuality of morality is exhibited.

And here Hegel has reached the same conclusion, although from pantheistic rather than from atheistic premisses, with Protagoras, Epicurus, Hobbes, and

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Diderot. The state is made supreme; the state is made the highest manifestation of the moral reason. Here all is actuality; 'all that is actual is also rational' — 'alles wirkliche ist auch vernünftig.' Hence also *war* as a phenomenon of the state is necessary, and is not to be treated as an evil. War is in the department of state morality what death is in that of nature. It is but death with a more exalted *morale*<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Phänomenologie*, 358; *Philos. des Rechts*, 417, 427; Wuttke, *Handbuch der christlichen Sittenlehre*, Bd. i, 273-278.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE NEED OF A REVELATION AS THE CRITERION OF MORALITY.

By reference to the fourth chapter of this work, it will be seen that it pertains to the essence of every law that it should be duly and properly published. Laws are a species of commands; and to every command there appertain, as we have abundantly shown, at least three elements—namely, first, the wish conceived by one rational being that another rational being should act or forbear; secondly, the notification or signification of the wish thus conceived; and thirdly, the intention of inflicting an evil in case of non-compliance with the wish so conceived and so signified. That is no command therefore which lacks the second element; much less can it be a law. To all legislation, therefore, and chiefest of all to all moral legislation, it is necessary that the provisions of the law, and indeed also the sanctions to be inflicted in case of non-compliance with those provisions, should be duly pre-signified. What constitutes the law must surely first be known before any obedience or disobedience can be exhibited towards its requirements. Nay, to a moral law it seems also necessary that the penalty

to be incurred should be presignified in order that the moral subject should clearly apprehend the exact nature of the matter at issue. Sanctions are in their measure a species of motives at once cogent and legitimate, calculated, as they are intended, to stimulate to virtue and deter from vice. Consequently that cannot be regarded as legislation at all, which does not involve within itself a due presignification of the obligations to be discharged, and also of the penalties to be inflicted in default thereof.

Apply this reasoning to the case before us—that, namely, of the moral law. Let it be once admitted that such moral law exists, or in other words, to descend from the abstract to the concrete, let it once be admitted that men are bound, are under obligation, for example, not to kill, nor to steal, nor to bear false witness, nor to commit adultery,—and we are also necessitated to hold that such law involves in its very concept the existence of the fact of its formal publication. Law is not law until it is duly published. Either moral law is not law, or it has at some time or other been distinctly and explicitly presignified. And the intrinsic value and vital importance of the moral law as being moral makes its plain and unmistakable annunciation ineffably momentous and important. Any kind of law could better dispense with the presignification of its terms and provisions than the law of morality. For no law has issues which can, in the remotest degree, compare with those of the law of right. Other laws have only temporal, this eternal penalties: other laws reach to the outer life alone, this to that inner spiritual world of ‘the thoughts and intents of the heart.’ Manifestly, therefore, if there is a moral

law, it must have been somewhere duly posited and formally presignified.

Observe, this idea of a presignification of moral law is necessarily connoted in the concept of law itself. It is more than a mere inference from the existence of law; but is implicated in the very notion of law, is an element of law, is that without which law could have no possible actuality.

But to what does this presignification of the law amount? It amounts clearly to an irrefragable and incontestable proof of the existence of a revelation—nay, it amounts to a proof of the supernatural. We saw in our fifth chapter that the giver of moral law must be a being far transcending in wisdom and might all human experience—a being who, if he falls short at all, falls short of omniscience and omnipotence, only in a degree certainly inappreciable to us. And therefore, since the publication of the moral law must issue from such a personality, in such manner as to leave no reasonable doubt that he, and none other, has so deposed and decreed it, then clearly we have within the law which binds our hearts and consciences evidence both that we are in relations with the supernatural, and that at some time or other direct intercourse has been established between that supernatural power and man; if for no other reason, then at least in order that the former as moral sovereign might be able duly to promulgate that law to the latter as his moral subject. The moral law exists. It must therefore have been promulgated. And consequently in order to its express promulgation or publication, the august lawgiver must have come into direct relationship with humanity. The promulgation must, in brief, have been supernaturally made.

In moral law we do then recognise the existence of a supernatural revelation considered as the formal publication of such law. Either the law which binds our consciences has been notified, or it has not. If it has been notified, then we have in such notification a revelation supernaturally made. If it has not been notified, then the so-called moral law is no law at all, and we are free to regard or disregard it as we please.

We lay it down, therefore, that, apart from any other consideration than that of the existence of moral law, we are compelled to the belief in a supernatural revelation.

But another question here arises as to whether it is possible for man to know, apart from such revelation, what his duties truly are. Can man dispense with revelation? Is it, in brief, a luxury? or is it not rather an absolute necessity? Is a science of ethics possible on independent grounds? Or is it not?

In order to securing an answer to these questions, we must consider, not the systems of morals which have been evolved by philosophers to whom the treasures of the Revealed Word have been accessible, but rather those moral dogmas of the heathen, whose isolation from all Christian sentiments and influences has been such as to leave us no doubt as to their being endemically and independently evolved.

Now, of most heathen peoples it may be affirmed that they furnish, not ethical systems, but only fragmentary precepts, memorabilia, moral sentences, and maxims, many of which are probably traditional,—having been handed down from a more enlightened primitive age.

Now 'it is the essence of heathenism,' writes Wuttke, 'that it has always a shrunken conception of the idea of God; that it apprehends the Divine Being always as being in some way or other limited; and that to this its imperfect conception of God its moral consciousness consequently corresponds<sup>1</sup>.'

We saw in our sixth chapter that atheism, or the denial of the total existence of God, ends inevitably, both in theory and in practice, in the overthrow of all moral government. Similarly, where God's existence is not utterly denied, but denied only in part, an exactly corresponding effect is produced upon morality. Now it was thus with heathenism in all its forms. Thus of the Chinese it may be said that their religious ideas are those of a clear and consistent naturalism. God is lost in nature; and so, we may add, is morality. In their view, life everywhere, even on its spiritual side, bears a naturalistic character: it has no history with a spiritual object attainable only through moral effort. Its morality is to sit still; a morality which looks not to the future but to the past; a morality which, instead of progress, lays down as the aim of the moral struggle the accurate repetition of the past. Good is not that which ought to be, but that which is. The highest good constitutes no aim or purpose to be reached, but consists rather in that which is eternally and immutably the same. Morality, therefore, has no high ideal, no remote aim, but requires on the part of man only passivity, mechanical order, and plastic subjection to custom and to the state. It is statical

<sup>1</sup> Handbuch der christl. Sittenlehre, Einl. iii. § 6; Geschichte des Heidenthums, i. § 11.

rather than dynamical, and consists rather in the preservation of a state of spiritual equilibrium, in keeping to the right medium, the *via media* being always best. As to the Divine Being, he is identified with nature, but is nevertheless tangibly represented by the emperor. The emperor is the Son of Heaven. He embodies the ideal of morality. He is the prototype of all virtue. He is the fountain of all law. In the direction of God the Chinese looks no further than this earthly representative. Strange to say, however, even the emperor may sin. The Chinese, although blessed with a peculiarly easy-going and comfortable morality, is nevertheless conscious of sin. Here, nevertheless, again he holds his own peculiar views. Sin he regards as a crime of the gravest character against all men and against nature. Man is injured by it, and so also is nature. It is the perturbing element; and droughts, famines, deluges, and pestilences are the natural consequences of its perturbations. Here there is at once much truth and much error. For sin is not conceived as being an offence against a personal overruling God, nor yet as having any consequences reaching beyond the present time. It thus awaits no future punishment. Its consequences are natural and immediate. It is punished now.

With the Chinese morality is a part of the course of nature. Of the moral life thus sketched the family is the central point. In it the Divine life is immediately revealed. Domestic life is a living Divine service. Domestic duties are the highest, having pre-eminence over every other. Veneration towards parents is a religious virtue. Thence also marriage is a moral obligation which no virtuous person will shun, since



the avoidance of matrimony breaks the family cycle, and is a crime against ancestry.

The perfect actuality of morality, however, appears conspicuously in the *State*, which is the family in its full and symmetric development. Of this community the emperor is the presiding centre. In China the State is all and in all. It is the great sea into which are emptied all the streams of the spiritual life. Even morality itself is placed absolutely and unconditionally under its tutelary guardianship. The Chinaman has no moral life except as a citizen and as a member of his family. No distinction is recognized between civil law and moral law, between the law of right and the law of the land. Nay, morality itself is only perfected through obedience to the laws of the State<sup>1</sup>. Here, by no merely accidental coincidence, the naturalism of the Chinese has furnished precisely the same issue—namely, the total identification of morality with State legislation, which was furnished respectively by the atheism of Democritus, Leucippus and Epicurus, the materialism of Hobbes and De la Mettrie, and the positivism of Comte. Morality, true and proper, invariably disappears, and in its place we get the leviathan which has devoured it—to wit, mere politics—the laws, enactments, and decretals of State assemblies.

If from China we turn to India, we alight upon a morality which, based in pantheism, is in both the Brahmanical and Buddhistic systems essentially *negative* in character. Thus all finite existence, and above all that of human personality, were regarded as vain,

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Sittenlehre*, Einl. §§ 6, 7.

transitory, untrue, and unauthorized. This it is, according to the Brahmans, because it is the Godhead estranged as it were from itself; or, according to the Buddhists, because the essence of all being is non-being. Hence the fundamental character of the Indian morality is self-abnegation, the renunciation of the world, a passive endurance in place of a creative activity. Thence also the aim of the moral life, or the supreme good, is no personal attribute, possession, or attainment, but the surrender of personality into the impersonal Divine essence, or the yielding up of being into non-being. Here are no high moral aims, no dazzling future of personal perfection. No: all real being, in as far as it exists in finite form, is evil,—not through fault of man, but in virtue of its very genesis as being conditioned and finite. And the only redemption which man, as personality, ought to covet as the acme of moral beatitude, is that of absorption into the infinite—of, in brief, complete annihilation.

In contrast to the Chinese naturalistic dualism, arising out of the unity of nature as the Divine, Brahmanism treats, as we have seen, the actual world as neither necessary nor lawful, but as rather a privation of the *Brahma*, to which, after an aimless existence, it is destined again to be re-absorbed. Morality consists thus in the cessation of the personal into the impersonal. Continued personal existence by metempsychosis is punishment, not reward. The actually existent is not, as in the Chinese faith, good as such; as individual being it is bad, and is good only in its universal Divine substance. Further, in Brahmanism the moral subject is not man in himself, for there is no one common humanity, but only different narrower or wider

circles around the Divine centre, which constitute different classes of men—classes at once naturally, spiritually, and morally separate and distinct the one from the other. And of these classes the lowest stands lower in grade than many animals, and is absolutely incapable of the moral life. To teach them the Vedas or the laws would be a crime worthy of the deepest hell. Only the three highest castes are capable of a knowledge of the truth, and with it of morality. But even they differ respectively in their capacities and missions. Thus the Indian moralists do not speak of the moral duties of *men*, or of *mankind*, but of the moral duties of castes. The highest good of the *Vaiçja* is riches, and his virtue is to diligently acquire. The highest good of the *Xatrija* is might, and his supreme virtue bravery. The highest good of the *Brahmane*, to whom alone the loftiest morality is possible, is to become one with Brahma by the loss of the personal in the impersonal, the finite in the Infinite. In like manner the Brahman's virtue is the renunciation, not merely of sensuous pleasure, of earthly wellbeing, but also of self-conscious personality. The cardinal point of this morality is consequently self-negation by means of methodical self-torment, in order that he may become *Brahma*. The Chinese work for the present, yet higher peoples for the future; but the Indians work not, but endure and die. Of sin the Indian has no conscious conviction. The evil of existence is not the fault of man; for all that is, and all that happens, is immediately Brahma's act.

Here, then, is unqualified and unconditional determinism.

As to Buddhism, instead of Brahma, it made out the

basis of all being to be *non-being*. All actuality is in itself *nil*. *Non-being* is at once the genesis and the terminus of all existences,—of man himself, and not less so of his moral effort. All is vain in heaven and upon earth; yea, heaven and earth themselves are vain; and upon the ruins of a broken-up world there sits enthroned nought but ever-enduring nonentity. This system is thus sheer and pitiless atheism—atheism without disguises. The Buddhist, with inconsolable thoughts and yet serious earnest, represents the God-forsaken world to man as it really is; denies him every pleasure, finds no joy therein, and makes his deep grief over all existence the fundamental principle of morality. Buddhism is, in brief, the religion of despair. All being begins and ends in non-being. So, in like manner, the end of all life and strife is the trackless extinction called *Nirvana*. Hence the Buddhist strives not, but endures the grief, the smart of the nonentity which underlies and nullifies all existence. The world's history is a vast tragedy. All living things writhe in deepest grief until they sink in death; and the consciousness of this grief is the beginning and the end of all wisdom.

Since, then, all actuality is vain and irrational, all true morality consists, by consequence, in the renunciation of the world, of all love for the present life, of all earthly desires. The feeling proper to the truly wise is that only of grief and compassion. So far was this dogma carried, that, in the purest and most ancient Buddha-learning, marriage, because it produced new existences, was regarded as evil, and was therefore forbidden to the absolutely pious.

Here, then, is a morality essentially negative in

character—a morality with no happy, self-developing, creative activities ; but one of dull, inconsolable abnegation and passive endurance. Its present is a present of absolute grief, and its future a future of endless extinction.

Here, then, we have at once false ideas of nature, of man, of duty, and of destiny ; a false cosmology, a false theology, a false anthropology, a false morality, and a false eschatology : and the summary consequence, a distorted life, a life of hopeless, of dark, of wretched bewilderment and confusion.

Turn, however, again from India to Egypt and Assyria, and the same sad need of heavenly light is seen. Here we alight upon dualism. At first God and nature were one. But, by an earnest struggle, that which is Divine fought its way upward from an impersonal to a personal existence. Hence the morality of the Egyptian and Assyrian consisted not in agreement with nature, as in the Chinese system, nor in the renunciation of nature, as in the Indian morals, but in the inner antithesis between two existences, the one personal, the other impersonal. Both these existences are Divine ; but yet distinct and opposed, the more spiritual to the less spiritual, the personal to the impersonal, the consciously Divine to nature or the unconsciously Divine.

Man finds himself placed midway between these two contending principles, and has to decide for the former, as the Divinely good, and against the latter, as not less Divinely bad. The ultimate aim of all this struggle is the future victory through the personal spirit of the good over the evil. Only through earnest contest, only through suffering and through death, are

even the gods able to retain their freedom. As to man, he does not as yet possess perfect freedom and perfect personality. They are in reserve for him after death, when he will have permanently subdued the evil principle. Only out of death does there germinate life, liberty, and victory in their fullest perfection.

Thus the Egyptian and Assyrian morality transcends the mere passive endurance of the Chinese and the abnegation of the Hindoo, discovering itself in active conflict with Typhon, the mighty power of evil, the impersonal principle of nature.

In Parsism this dualism is yet further developed. The antagonism is no longer between a personal and an impersonal principle, but between two personal powers, two personal Divine essences, the one good, *Ahura-Mazda*, and the other evil, *Angra-Mainyus*. With the Persians, all evil eventuates through personal action; but this action, thus originative of evil, is not historical, but pre-historical, not human, but Divine. Sin is, therefore, not of man, but of God. Morality is here, as in the dualism of the Egyptians and Assyrians, a conflict, a warfare. It has no foundation in merely natural feelings and prepossessions, but in the determinate consciousness of the holy will of Ahura-Mazda, or the good god, as expressly revealed to men in the Zendavesta. Thus the Persian feels that he is a θεομάχος, that he has to contend with a God and with his creation; and, unlike the Brahman and the Buddhist, he pines not after the nether-world. He has in his moral arena a noble, a lofty aim—to wit, the redemption of the world from evil; an aim, of the attainment of which he feels assured, since Çaoshyang

(pron. *shoshiosh*), the Saviour, but once come, will fill up his shortcomings in the strife, and will perfect the victory.

Here there is manifestly a *liaison* of Parsism with Judaism and Christianity. There is much truth; but it is truth overlaid and buried by untruth. Here evil is as much Divine as is that which is good. Sin is of God, not of man. Morality reposes on man's innate love of war: and virtue is but warfare on the side of *Abura-Mazda*, as against *Angra-Mainyus*.

Almost equally grotesque are many of the conceptions of the Greeks as to the nature of morality. We have already passed in review the repulsive moral systems of Leucippus, Democritus, Protagoras, and Epicurus, as also of the Sophists and Sceptics. But even in the philosophies of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno, although these sages were not hopelessly cut off from the true source of light, as were the Chinese, Brahmans, and Buddhists. The Greek philosophy was eclectic. It borrowed from other sources, when that was convenient and practicable.

Take the ethics of Socrates. It was radically wrong; for it based morality in knowledge. Sin was mere ignorance. If man did wrong, it was because he knew not the right; for it is in man's nature to seek good and shun evil. Here then, in a word, every fundamental principle is false, and false *in toto*.

Plato's ethics were similarly based. As in the Socratic morality, the passions are entirely disregarded. Virtue is made purely a matter of intelligence. Evil, if not inherent in matter, is at least occasioned by it. Intelligence alone is good. His philosophy is practically

dualistic. As to human freedom, he vacillates between opposite opinions. In one place he advocates free-will, in another fatalism. At one time vice is treated as voluntary, at another as involuntary. The family he entirely absorbs in the state, insisting upon a community of wives and of goods.

With Aristotle the whole of morality was made to repose upon a subjective basis, which, without any further consideration, constituted its radical error. It presents itself not so much as the holy will of a Divine Being, as rather a thing wholly of this world and of this present fleeting life. It is the ethics of China passed through the brain of a philosophic Greek.

Of Zeno, one word and we have done. With the Stoic there were held to be two elements in nature, *matter*, or the passive element, and *reason*, or the active element. But this reason was also called God, and fate (εἰμαρμένη). Here reason is the formative principle of nature; and, if so, manifestly virtue is to live conformably to nature—τὸ ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν<sup>1</sup>, that is, since reason directs nature conformably to reason. What reason recommends is therefore virtue; what it condemns is vice. Hence, whatever disturbed reason was to be shunned as evil. Therefore the Stoic despised his emotions, passions, and senses. He aimed at imperturbable apathy. This doctrine, apparently so ascetic in character, led nevertheless to the most shameless immoralities. Marriage was despised; but sexual intercourse out of wedlock was held to be right, and that against all opinions to the contrary. Nay, it is

<sup>1</sup> Diog. Laert. Lib. VII. cap. i.



pretty certain that Zeno and Chrysippus demanded community of wives, fleshly intercourse between blood relations (even between parents and children), whoredom, self-pollution, and pederasty, as being all alike lawful to the wise<sup>1</sup>. Had they not Plato's doctrine on their side? In fact, Stoicism took under its protection not only fornication, adultery, incest, and the most loathsome fleshly lusts, but also falsehood, revenge, and self-murder. Forgiveness was itself a sin; and to forgive an enemy was but to add a new injustice to those already perpetrated by the offender. Stoicism had also a ridiculous side. 'Thus, all actions conformable with reason are good; and not only all good, but all equally so. In like manner, all actions not conformable with reason are bad, and all equally bad. The absurdities which this doctrine led them into are innumerable: enough if we mention that one gravely repeated by Persius, that to move your little finger without a reasonable motive is a crime equal to killing a man, since both are non-conformable with reason. There is great difficulty in crediting such extravagances, but really there seems no limit to *systematic* errors<sup>2</sup>.'

And what is the inevitable conclusion which this survey forces upon us? It is emphatically this, that, apart from revelation, the attainment even of correct moral conceptions is absolutely and hopelessly impracticable. That very revelation which, as we have

<sup>1</sup> Epict. Encheir. 33; Diog. Laert. Lib. vii. 13, 33, 131, 188; Sext. Emp. Hyp. iii. 24; Wuttke, Sittenlehre, Band i. SS. 100-108.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical History of Philosophy, by G. H. Lewes, vol. ii. p. 163. London, 1845.

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seen, is implicated in the idea of law, in the true concept of what law is, is also that which was in the last degree desirable in order to meet the deep, agonizing, spiritual and moral needs of our universal humanity.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE SUSPENSION OF MORAL SANCTIONS—ITS TRUE EXPLICATION.

THERE is one other point which we must distinctly notice before proceeding to our final determination of the question under discussion.

In our fifth chapter we saw, among other things, that the notion of law is adverse to the suspension of sanctions. What is it that converts the mere wish into an imperative command? For, whatever that may be, it is evidently the chief constituent element of law, an element which, if lightly dispensed with, unmakes the law which it had previously made. What, then, is the element in question? It is, we reply, the sanction or sanctions with which the law is armed.

Now there may be many occasions on which human sanctions are suspended, even when those sanctions have been incurred. There is what frequently happens, namely, the possibility of escaping detection. Or, if detected, the guilty party may escape detention, may elude the vigilance of the servants of the law.

Now, manifestly, none of these circumstances could happen under true moral government. Such is the omniscience of the august moral Lawgiver, that no sin escapes His eye. Such is His ubiquity, that there

is no coverture from His presence. And finally, such is His power over man and over nature, that there need be no voidance of His laws through any lack of the proper enginery of prompt punishment.

If, therefore, the sanctions of the moral law are not promptly and fully executed, it must be for reasons totally distinct from those already alluded to.

Now moral science has and ought to have an historical basis. And what does history teach us on this matter? Why, it teaches us that the sanctions of the moral law are neither *promptly* nor yet *fully* met in the present life. They are not totally in abeyance, it is true. For were that the case, it might afford too strong a *prima facie* probability to the supposition that peradventure there is no such thing as moral government at all. No; sin is punished. Nature and society are constituted in view of that result. But sin, although punished, is not punished to the full; neither is it punished promptly. And sometimes indeed it seems altogether to escape its condign reward.

Now why is this?

There must be a good and sufficient reason—a reason, too, of the most stupendous and extraordinary kind. That can surely be no trifle which has served to bring about a state of things such as is presented in the daily history of the human race.

Something wholly commensurate in dignity and importance with the aim and purpose of the moral law itself has and must have happened. Any other hypothesis is utterly untenable.

What is that something? How is it that the wicked are in such prosperity and spread themselves, as the Psalmist complained, like a green bay-tree? How is

it that evil deeds are done openly and in God's daylight, not only with impunity but with evident present advantage? And how is it, too, that the virtuous are, even of all men, the most tried, tested, and afflicted?

Surely these are phenomena little short of miraculous. Nay, they are more than miraculous. Miracles do not contradict the reason. But those phenomena are contradictions of something higher and more imperative than mere reason; they are contradictions of the supreme laws of the universe to which all other laws and facts owe a due and reverent subordination. What extraordinary circumstance is it, then, which can worthily solve this dark enigma, this awful mystery of being?

One more appeal to history, and the enigma is solved, the mystery is explained.

Seen in the light of eternal REDEMPTION, the entire phenomena of the moral world are no longer perplexing, but are plain and easy of comprehension. This glorious, this stupendous, this matchless, this superhuman and supernatural intervention in man's behalf explains it all.

Human life is not an ordinary arena of moral life. It presents the moral life under extraordinary and exceptional conditions.

In this mundane sphere man is not only being governed; but he is also being saved, delivered, redeemed! And hence, as the theatre of redemption, it witnesses the partial suspension of moral sanctions, presenting to all men the inevitable alternative either of being saved here, or of being punished hereafter.

## CHAPTER X.

### MORALITY CONSIDERED PER SE.

WE are now in a position finally to determine the question, What is Christian moral science? If we revert for a moment to the preceding portions of this essay, it will be seen that they have formed an indispensable preparation for the result now to be evolved.

We are now able to affirm, without fear of contradiction, that all moral science is, and must be, theistic; and secondly, that all human moral science, that is, all moral science as it stands related to man, is and must be Christian. This we regard as a determination of the intensest moment to the wellbeing of human society. Once let this truth be duly recognised among men, and it must furnish to the discriminating and judicious advocates of the Christian faith a mechanical leverage by means of which they might easily overturn the prevalent systems of unbelief.

But it is important to observe that in making the above affirmation we are taking nothing for granted which we have not already clearly and distinctly proved.

If we revert to the ground which we have already traversed, we shall see that, having in our first chapter mooted the question to be determined—namely, What

is Christian moral science,—we have gradually progressed towards a satisfactory solution. In our second chapter, for example, we discussed with some care the proper definition of moral science *per se*, as also of Christian moral science. In our third chapter, having cleared the fundamental term ‘law’ from the ruinous confusion of thought which has too long characterized its employment, we indicated with precision the province of ethical science, describing the limits which separated it from closely cognate departments of speculation. In our fourth chapter, we evolved the implicates of law, juridical and moral. In our fifth, we demonstrated how out of those implicates there arose a necessary, yes, *necessary* relationship between all moral science and the existence of God, considered under the aspect of a moral lawgiver and sovereign. In our sixth and seventh chapters, we showed how atheism and pantheism overturn by consequence all morality and all moral government, taken in any proper sense of those terms. In our eighth and ninth chapters, we further demonstrated that the very concept of moral law necessarily, yes, *necessarily* implicates the existence on the one hand of a supernatural revelation, and on the other of an equally supernatural intervention in man’s behalf. We demonstrated, in a word, that morality, in as far as it concerned man, stood in inseparable and essential relations with revelation and redemption; that, in brief, all human morality is, and *must* be, CHRISTIAN. And having reached this point in our argument, we can without unwarrantable assumptions, regarding Christian moral science as, for man at least, the alone true science of morality, proceed forthwith to present in outline the departments

of thought and of inquiry which that science may be said properly to comprehend.

In so doing, however, let our specific object be kept clearly in view. The question which we have to answer is, 'What is Christian moral science?' We have already plainly established that for man there can be no true moral science which is not Christian. In the remainder of our task all that is required of us is, not that we should write a system of Christian morals, but that we should indicate the right paths of inquiry which, in view of such system, ought to be pursued by the collaborateurs of that noble Christian Association in whose interests this essay has been penned.

By reference to pp. 265 and 292 of this work, it will be seen that *three* things are essential to a complete system of Christian ethics. Morality has to be contemplated under three different sets of conditions—namely, *first*, as it existed in its state of primitive purity; *secondly*, as it appears in its perversion by sin; and *lastly*, as it appears, and will appear, in its renovation by redemption.

'Christianity,' writes Neander, 'brought about an important revolution in the ethical and anthropological views of mankind, by the doctrine of a primitive condition, and of man's loss of it by an act of his own free will. But to its influence belongs also another fact, that it placed anthropology in connection with the doctrine concerning spirits (pneumatology), inasmuch as it caused the essence of spirit, as the image of God, to be recognised as the common element in man and all ranks of the spiritual world, and as a common destination having its ground therein; inasmuch as it presented, on the one hand, the fellowship of one



Divine life uniting together all spirits in the kingdom of God, and, on the other, referred the origin also of the ungodly life back to the first act of the self-will of a higher intelligence. The latter fact was particularly important, as opposed to the heathen view of sin as founded in nature<sup>1</sup>, and to all the tendencies which led men to regard it as something necessarily rooted in the natural organization of man, in the union of a reason with a sense. Now . . . the Christian faith requires the union of these momenta. here unfolded<sup>2</sup>.' In this pregnant passage the *ensemble* of Christian moral science has been suggestively sketched; and it exhibits substantially the same fundamental component elements as the threefold division of Wuttke.

This threefold division we shall therefore adopt. We come then to consider:—

1. Morality in its original purity, or morality *per se*.

Christian dogma refers us back to a time when man was in a state of perfect innocence and happiness. Heathen nations have placed nature and spirit in antagonism the one to the other. With the Brahman, the Buddhist, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Egyptian, nature was regarded as *evil*. Similarly Plato and the Gnostics. But such ideas are radically wrong, and lead to the most pernicious derivative doctrines concerning the nature and origin of sin. Hence Christianity, as the true religion, sets up a totally different theory. It teaches us that nature, as the handiwork of God, was good and not evil; and so, in like manner,

<sup>1</sup> As, for example, in *naturalism* and *dualism*.

<sup>2</sup> General History of the Christian Religion and Church, vol. ii. p. 342.

man, when first created, was created in the image of God, and was perfect—a perfect creature in the midst of a perfect creation.

Now man as a rational and sentient creature had, even when sinless and perfect, a life-history, a determinate end to fulfil, an ideal to actualize, a mission to discharge, without which his moral life must have been tame, tiresome, and insipid. In brief, he was a moral being with moral relations, moral capacities, moral activities, moral duties, and moral responsibilities.

Christianity, then, unconditionally demands the due recognition of a former existence of moral government under conditions wholly different from those under which its actualization is now possible. Both history and logic, therefore, require that the science of Christian ethics should be constructed in view of these phenomena. The science of Christian morals, if it is not to ignore those doctrines by virtue of which that very Christianity stands in marked antagonism to naturalism and dualism, must develop, in the first instance, the principles of this primitive, this pristine morality: it must discuss, in brief, morality *per se*.

Now there are two fundamental factors to all morality, under what conditions soever that morality has to be evolved; namely, *God*, on the one hand, as moral prototype, moral lawgiver, and moral sovereign; and *man*, on the other hand, as the moral eikon or image of his maker, as a moral creature, as the terminus of the moral law, and therefore as a moral subject. Hence a false theology on the one side, and a false anthropology on the other, are, taken either separately or in combination, alike subversive of all true morality. Accordingly, to cite again the words of the great Neander,

‘Christianity brought about an important revolution,’ in not only ‘the ethical,’ but also ‘the anthropological views of mankind.’ And to this we may add that it has ever opposed its own Trinitarian theology to atheism, pantheism, ditheism as in the Parsic faith, and polytheism. Moral science must therefore embrace a careful, accurate, and systematic study of both the Divine and the human, of both God and man. This constitutes, in brief, its double foundation, its twofold basis, out of which all the other parts of morality methodically and naturally arise. What these other parts are we must now rapidly indicate. Morality is concerned, then, not only with theology and anthropology, but also with actions<sup>1</sup> and their consequences and annexes; we say annexes, because to actions, good and bad, besides their natural consequences, there are also annexed as sanctions, as rewards and punishments, many pleasures and pains not naturally flowing from the actions themselves, but which are in fact super-added to the natural issues.

Keeping these facts in view, Wuttke has arranged all morality *per se* under six divisions:—(1) Man treated as the moral subject. (2) God as the prototype of the moral life, the upholder of the moral constitution, and the giver of the moral law. (3) The

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Arist. Nic. Eth. Bk. VI. chap. iv. § 3; Pufendorf, De Officio Hom. Bk. I. chap. i. § 2. The Greeks distinguished between πράξεις and ποιήσεις. By πράξεις were intended those actions which are prompted by the emotive principles of human nature, and which terminate in the satisfaction of the particular desire or passion by which they were originally prompted. By ποιήσεις were meant those actions which come more under intellectual control, and find their terminus in some objective product.

objective existence ; namely, the Creator and the created, to which our moral actions stand related. (4) The motive principles of morality. (5) Moral action considered in itself. (6) The aim of all right action, or the fruits and consequences of the moral life contemplated as the ultimate object in view of which such moral life receives its evolution<sup>1</sup>.

These divisions, however, may be reduced to four, viz.—

- I. Ethical anthropology.
- II. Ethical theology.
- III. Ethical action *per se*.
- IV. Ethical action considered in its consequences and annexes.

Let us now glance as fully at each of these subdivisions as our narrow limits will allow us.

We consider then :—

- I. Ethical anthropology.

The systematic study of human nature is fundamental to ethical science even in this the first of its three main departments. This is manifest on a moment's consideration. As Wuttke has remarked, 'the basis (Grundlage) of the moral life is the individual moral person ; but in as far as a multitude of persons are bound together into one spiritual living whole, in so far does such a totality itself constitute a moral subject with an individual moral mission<sup>2</sup>.' Man is an individual moral person ; and the entire race constitutes a corporate person, a vital whole, with its individual moral problem and moral vocation. Just as life lies at the

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, Christliche Sittenlehre, Band i. S. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Band i. S. 327.

foundation of activity, and as moral life lies at the foundation of moral activity, even so man's vital and personal existence underlies all human morality. He is the subject of at least human morality, and it is with human morality that we are more especially concerned—morality, that is to say, as exhibited by man as a vital, personal, and moral unit, and as due from man as an inferior to God as superior, nay, as supreme. Here is a twofold sense of the word 'subject;' and in both senses does his life underlie the phenomena of ethics.

Man is a moral subject as being an individual vital, rational, automatic, moral, personal unit consciously distinct from other like rational moral units from nature, and from God. He is also a moral subject, not merely in the sense of being a personality underlying and supporting the phenomena of the moral life, but also in the sense of being, as a created existence, subordinate to moral rule and authority. In both these senses of the term, all created spiritual beings are moral subjects, and have, as such, a common destination. In so far angelic morality, and the morality due from man in his sinless estate, were in essence identical. Schleiermacher was certainly in error when he restricted moral action, and in fact morals considered as a science, to the present life, excluding them from the future life and existence of the blessed<sup>1</sup>. The phenomenal form of morality with the spirits of the

<sup>1</sup> 'Die Darstellung der vollendeten Einigung der Vernunft mit der Natur fällt nicht in die Ethik. . . . Reine Vernunft also und seliges Leben kommen in der Sittenlehre nirgend unmittelbar vor, sondern nur natürliche Vernunft und irdisches (widerstrebendes) Leben.'—System der Sittenlehre, §§ 88, 89. Cf. §§ 100, 101.

just made perfect and with the angels, may indeed be other than that presented upon the earth in the life of man. But in essence it is the same, since morality is, if not in form, yet at least in matter, universally one and identical.

Now man as a moral subject may be contemplated under two aspects; either first as an individual, or secondly as a member of a moral community.

Now *first* as an individual moral subject.

Man as an individual moral subject appears as a spiritual being, as a corporeal being, and lastly as a being in whom both natures (the spiritual and the material) are organically united. We can only throw out the briefest suggestives possible. Consider for a moment man as a *spiritual nature*, or as *spirit*. It is through this, their common spiritual nature, rather than through their fleshly or bodily part, that all men everywhere are one. 'The basis and essence of spiritual existence (Geistigkeit),' writes Wuttke, 'is the personal self-consciousness. Only in as far as man is conscious can man be moral, and in virtue of this self-consciousness is he answerable for his life, in virtue thereof is this life itself accounted as moral <sup>1</sup>.' Through this self-consciousness man recognises himself as a personal individual, that is, as a being distinct from others, not merely as one mere existence differs from another mere existence, but distinct from others as having a spiritual individuality peculiar and proper to himself alone. This individuality, however, is either natural or it is not. Developed through moral action it constitutes individual character. According to Schleiermacher this individuality is originally distinctive in all men, prior

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Christliche Sittenlehre*, Bd. i. 328.

to any evolution of it by moral activity. In preceding moral systems, as the Kantian, the especial individuality of the personal spirit was either neglected or thrust into the background. By Schleiermacher it was brought into due prominence, but was treated one-sidedly, by making the respective differences between men original and natural<sup>1</sup>. But this position he took up with perfect consistency as a pantheist of the school of Schelling and Hegel. Rothe employs the notion of Schleiermacher, with, however, less regard to due logical sequence. Wuttke puts the matter clearly. 'The individual personal spirit has,' he says, 'in distinction from all other personal spirits, a determinate individuality (*Eigenthümlichkeit*) to accrue in the course of development to him alone, which raises him above the mere unit to determinate personality.' This individuality exists within him in germ<sup>2</sup>. 'This germ,' he adds, 'lying in the essence of the rational spirit itself, does not contain as yet the determinate individuality itself; it requires, in fact, that he should develop it, but *how*, to what kind of individuality he may develop himself, that depends upon the free moral action of the man himself<sup>3</sup>.' The very custom of giving a name to each person, a custom prevalent among all nations, gives, in Wuttke's opinion, support to this theory of human individuality.

But to proceed. (1) Man as spirit is capable of *knowledge*. But the aim of knowledge is truth; and the spirit which is capable of knowledge is also capable of truth. Knowledge is in itself true, and not deceptive; for the creation of God is good, and true as being

<sup>1</sup> System der Sittenlehre, 157-172.

<sup>2</sup> Christliche Sittenlehre, Bd. i. 329.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. p. 330.

good, and in harmony with itself. Under this aspect man is clearly capable of knowing God. Here, then, there is at once a blow to pantheistic ontology and the 'know-nothing' philosophy of the Hamiltonian school. Man has been capable of knowing God, not only negatively, or as He is not, but also positively, or as He *is*. Similarly the Kantian assertion, that things *an sich*, or in themselves, remain concealed from human perception, and that all knowledge of reality in the province of pure reason has only a formal and subjective signification, certainly contradicts the Christian conception of the universe, which reposes firm trust in the harmony of existence.

Many portions of Holy Scripture might be collated and compared bearing upon this and similar related topics.

(2) Man as spirit has also a voluntary or *volitional* nature.

Here would come in a full discussion of the freedom of the will in its relation to morality. First, there should be direct reference to the testimony of Scripture. Next should come the history of the question, with especial reference to those systems in which a necessitarian theory had been insisted upon, as well Pagan as Christian. Such a history would be intensely interesting and highly instructive, as showing to what other dogmas in particular moral fatalism usually stood related. Pantheism is essentially necessitarian; so also is atheism. Epicurus, it is true, tried to foist in a modified doctrine of human liberty, but in so doing he was, as an atheist, inconsistent. Spinoza denied the freedom of the will, as also did Schelling in his earlier writings. Similarly Schleiermacher rejects the doctrine of freedom, while Daub and Romang, following Schleiermacher, reduce it



to mere seeming freedom (Scheinfreiheit). Hegel loves to talk of freedom, while however his entire system is, notwithstanding, in diametrical opposition to the existence in man of any such faculty. Fichte, following in the steps of Kant, exalted 'the categorical imperative' of the former into a sort of moral fate<sup>1</sup>. In our own country the opinions of Hobbes, Hume, Priestley, and others of their school, are already known.

(3) Man as spirit possesses an *emotional* nature. He is an emotional being, a being capable of passions (πάθη). This is the impulsive part of human nature, and one intimately connected with morality and moral action. For all action of a moral kind presupposes *emotion*, or conative energy. These conative energies are therefore called by some *active powers*. Conative energies is however the best term; *energies*, because they are all mental forces; conative, what is common to them all is the conation or effort made by them to reach their object. These constitute moreover man's capacity for happiness or misery.

(4) Finally, man as spirit is *immortal*. The belief in immortality is presupposed by all morality. For the moral mission, the end contemplated by the moral life, requires eternity for its actualization. Kant deduced the idea of immortality as a postulate of the reason. Schleiermacher is disposed to dispense with immortality, affirming that the purest morality is perfectly compatible with 'a renunciation of the continuity of personality.' In the Hegelian philosophy morality is

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Schopenhauer, Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik, 181, 182; System der Sittenlehre, p. 58; Nachgelassene Werke, Bd. iii. Bonn, 1835.

also wholly divorced from all belief in the eternal future existence of the soul.

Here there is ample scope for the Christian moralist.

Man, then, considered as spirit, self-conscious, perceptive, volitional, emotional, and immortal, would furnish what we may term the psychology of morality, a subordinate department of general ethical anthropology.

## II. Man is *body* as well as soul.

It is through his body that man comes into contact with the outer world. The senses are the means of intercommunication. On the one hand we have exclusive spiritualism, on the other exclusive materialism. Is sense-knowledge trustworthy? Is there any prepensity to evil in the body as such, more than in the soul? What is the relation between bodily pain and sin?

## III. Man is the union of both.

In virtue of the union between the soul and the body, the former is in many ways conditioned and determined in the moral life by the latter. This is seen in the various stages of bodily and mental development, in the diversities of temperament characterizing individuals, and the idiosyncrasies of nations and races, and most perceptibly in the mental differences due to sex. To this heading there would also pertain a discussion of many topics of medical psychology—of the influence of cerebral organization on character, of the nature of mental and moral maladies, and of hereditary predispositions. Equally important would be a discussion of the reflex influence of mind upon organization.

Such would be some only of the intensely interesting topics to be discussed under ethical anthropology.

Added to this, man must be considered not only in his individual capacity, but also in his capacity as a member of a moral community. Hence again would arise many interesting problems of social and official morality.

To summarize what has been already said :—

I. Ethical anthropology includes the following subdivisions.

A. Man as an individual.

a. Man as spirit.

1. As percipient spirit.
2. As volitional spirit.
3. As emotive spirit.
4. As immortal spirit.

b. Man as body.

c. Man as both spirit and body.

1. Stages of bodily development.
2. Individual temperaments and idiosyncrasies of race.
3. Sex.

B. Man as a member of a moral communion.

We proceed now with the utmost brevity to develop the other three divisions of morality *per se*, or morality considered *out* of relation to *sin* and to *redemption*. Consider then :—

II. Ethical theology.

Ethics however, it may be considered, involves inevitable relationships with God. True morality is only possible where there is a true consciousness of God. The moral *idée* is a mere chimæra, a mere delusion, apart from its actualization in the Divine Being. Here,

and here alone, is a firm basis for morality. And thus as a false anthropology, so also, only in a more emphatic degree, does a false theology pervert and utterly destroy everything fundamental to true ethics.

Now the personal God is the *basis* of morality in four senses:—

1. As holy will—as the exemplar of all holy volition;
2. As the prototype of morality;
3. As the upholder of the moral constitution;  
and
4. As the giver of the moral law.

On each of these points it would be easy to enlarge; but our limits absolutely forbid.

The conception of God as the giver of the moral law conducts at once to the conception of that law as a revelation of the Divine will. The law may be considered, first, as to the mode of its promulgation; and secondly, as to its own interior essence.

A. The law, as a revelation of the Divine will, considered as to the mode of its promulgation, may be contemplated on the one hand as being given supernaturally in an objective form, constituting revelation proper; and upon the other as being given naturally, in a subjective form, constituting what are commonly termed the dictates of conscience.

The first, or *Revelation Proper*, embraces not only the contents of the law of morality, but also, as such, a revelation of the will of God, thus bringing man not only face to face with his duty, but also face to face with his God.

The second, or *Revelation Improper*, while having a *liaison* with theology, has an equally close relationship

to psychology. *Conscience* is a sort of interior revelation. It is also a part of human nature which, in an especial manner, brings man into relationship with his Maker. But, while to omit its mention in this connection would be an error, the entire theory concerning conscience pertains rather to our first, that of Ethical Anthropology, than to our present division.

B. The law, considered as to its interior essence, suggests the following topics:—

- a. The form of the law, as *bidding* and *forbidding*, and as *imperative*.
- b. The compass of the law.
- c. The relation of the law to personal peculiarity, or idiosyncrasy.

Thus far, then, for the *theology* of ethics. Here there is, if the topics of Ethical Theology are properly handled, a perfect armoury with which to batter down the strongholds of unbelief. Here too, as in the anthropological section, history should be resorted to. A historical *résumé* of false theologies, just as in the preceding subdivision, a historical *résumé* of false anthropologies, considered strictly in relation to ethics, would be of immense polemical value.

We come to consider, however—

### III. Moral Action *per se*.

Morality is concerned not only with persons, but also with *actions*. Whatever results from the energy of volition is an action; and in its turn the will is usually impelled by the emotive or conative energies. Actions may thus be regarded as of two kinds, exterior and interior. Many volitions, many wishes, get no further than the mere state of volition or wish—never reach, that is to say, to objective conation or effort.

They are yet, nevertheless, actions—actions of the inner man—actions of the soul, if not actions of the body.

Now moral actions may be divided into two chief classes; namely, first, *interior*, and secondly, *exterior* actions. Observe then—

*A. Interior Actions.*

Actions proceed from impulsions in human nature. These impulsions—powers of conation or effort—are in themselves, like the powers of physical motion, good. They may, however, be wisely or unwisely directed. Tallying with these emotive powers are those aims, objects, or purposes set before the mind, which, aiding it in self-determination, are termed motives. In the mere faculty of conation, the mere power residing within us of making endeavour or effort towards an object, there is nothing of the nature of morality. The rightness or wrongness of such conation or effort is to be sought in the *motive* which evoked it. And here there is scope for law. All motives are not equally lawful. Some are absolutely wicked, others absolutely good. Now as *wishes* and *motives* are always in harmony, they may for *practical* purposes be regarded as one, in such manner as that a classification of wishes considered as *interior actions* may be regarded as a classification of motives. These may then be conveniently subdivided, in reference to the objects upon which they fix, into—

1. Wishes in relation to God.
2. Wishes in relation to man,
3. Wishes in relation to self,
4. Wishes in relation to the external world or nature.

And each of these subdivides again into—

- a.* Wishes calculated to lead to forbearances, or briefly, wishes of forbearance; and
- b.* Wishes calculated to lead to actions (exterior actions of course), or briefly, wishes of action.

**B. Exterior Actions.**

These may also be conveniently divided as above in relation to their objects. Thus we have—

- 1. Actions in relation to God.
- 2. Actions in relation to man.
- 3. Actions in relation to self.
- 4. Actions in relation to nature.

And each of these is again subdivisible into

- a.* Actions of forbearance.
- b.* Actions of appropriation or acquisition.

Thus to take only one illustrative instance, namely, Actions in relation to God. These are, as has been just said, subdivisible into (*a*) acts of forbearance towards God; and (*b*) acts of appropriation in relation to God.

Now acts of forbearance towards God, even in a state of innocence, *condition* our appropriation of Him.

These acts of forbearance relate (1) to immediate personal revelations of God Himself. There is no such thing as quiescent deportment towards God. Mere inaction, mere inattention to the Divine presence, is an offence against God Himself. Not to be seriously concerned in relation to God is to do Him marked dishonour.

These acts of forbearance relate (2) to the verbal revelation of God—to His Divine Word; (3) to the Name of God; (4) to the human organs of the Divine

revelation, as prophets, messengers, and ministers; (5) to times, places, and things especially devoted and set apart to Divine purposes and uses.

As regards acts of appropriation in relation to God, they include the ethical bearings of the worship and religion—the whole of the moral phases of a true cultus. It embraces two principal elements. Considered as the highest kind of moral self-culture, the appropriation of God as our own—whereby He becomes ours and we become His, and in becoming His are gradually uplifted in holy communion and fellowship with Him—includes upon the one hand *faith*, which reposes on dogma, and upon the other hand *worship*, which contemplates God Himself as being truly known. Thus faith and worship are mutually necessary. One is vain without the other.

Under *Faith* and *Worship* there would naturally be several subdivisions, into which we cannot by any possibility enter.

This is but a specimen of the manner in which actions, as they stand related not only to God, but also to man, to self, and to nature, admit of being treated. We must now, however, pass to the last main division of morality *per se*, namely—

IV. Moral action considered in relation to its consequences and annexes.

Under this heading it would be proper to discuss the true theory of happiness, and the exact relation in which happiness stands to morality. Is morality to be based upon happiness? With what we already know in relation to morality, it manifestly is not and cannot be so based. Morality is more than mere eudæmonism.



If there is one grand ultimate aim ('Zweck,' as the Germans say) which morality and the moral life contemplate more than another, it is of supreme importance to know what that grand ultimate ideal is. Certain it is that God as a rational and moral Being had an *object* in view in His creation of man—an object in every way worthy of His infinite wisdom, goodness, and love. If, then, that sublime Divine intention can be but once known, the ultimate destination to which all human morality ought to refer itself is also known and determined.

Happiness, correctly considered, is the consequence, the effect and not the cause, of morality in actions. Wuttke regards the personal perfection of individual man as constituting the object had in view by God in our creation, the aim and sequence proper to all moral action, and the true explication of that wherein happiness consists<sup>1</sup>.

Under this head, then, two leading divisions have been already suggested; that is to say,

1. The sequences—natural sequences of moral action.
2. The annexes of moral action—not accruing by way of natural sequence.

Here, again, the natural sequences of the moral life may be contemplated as *exterior* and *interior*. By the exterior consequences of moral action are meant those results which usually flow from thrift, moderation, perseverance, &c., such as *property* and *honour*, among men, and the *power* thence resulting.

By the interior sequences are meant all the joys,

<sup>1</sup> Christliche Sittenlehre, Bd. i. 519.

delights, and advantages which the good man feels in the virtuous development of his own moral being; as, for example, the perfection of knowledge, the perfection of feeling, the perfection of volition, the realization of a holy freedom, and, in brief, of all that can constitute a pure and holy *character*.

Virtue is not merely a duty; it is, as contemplated in its natural sequences, a creative *power* lying within us. It begets new increments of spiritual life. And thus the virtuous man is a man ever progressing upward towards God, leaving ever farther and farther behind the narrow conditions of his commencing life. And each virtue brings with it its appropriate reward.

Hence a discussion of the psychological and spiritual consequences of the various forms of moral action, taken individually and distributively, would furnish the most remarkable and unthought-of results.

There are, however, annexes to moral action. Now moral action is in the view of the law either bidden or forbidden. Law must take the form both of injunction and prohibition (*Gebot* and *Verbot*). Similarly of the annexes and consequences of moral action—they are either annexes and consequences of happiness or of misery.

Only in the moral life, considered apart from actual sin, the annexes and consequences of the latter class are merely contingent, and are contemplated simply in view not of actualities, but of possibilities.

Virtue, then, has exterior and interior annexes. God adds to a man's outer and inner life many blessings not strictly pertaining, in the way of natural sequence, to his moral conduct. These He superadds over and above all that might have been looked for and expected.

These, of course, it would be interesting to have duly studied and classified.

These, again, accrue to man in his twofold capacity as an individual and as a member of social communities. The sequences and annexes reach man not only as an individual person, but also as a member of the family, of the Church, and of the State.

So much for morality *per se*—that is, morality considered apart from sin in its actuality, and apart from the scheme of redemption.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MORALITY IN ITS PERVERSION BY SIN.

WE come now to consider the second of the three great provinces of Christian ethics, namely, *Morality in its perversion by sin.*

All experience teaches us that evil is no longer a mere possibility, a mere contingency attaching to the moral life. It has, upon the contrary, become actual. Sin has effected an entrance into the arena of human strife and effort, and has totally altered the whole aspect of man's existence. So much is this the case, that to contemplate moral phenomena with a view to a science of ethics, without contemplating sin as the force which has upheaved the world, so to say, from its very centre, and thrown all mundane things into dire and chaotic confusion, would be scientific madness.

Nay, it is impossible, apart from a determination of the nature and influence of this evil principle, to determine what are, in the present state of human nature and of human society, the actual conditions of moral action, and what are the life-problems which, as a moral subject, man is called upon to solve. The conditions of morality *per se* are, and manifestly must

be, different from the conditions of morality in a state of sin. As we considered the former in our last chapter, we come now to consider the latter.

2. Morality in its perversion by *sin*.

In unfolding this subject, it is not necessary to deviate from the order observed in our last chapter, except to add a preliminary division on the essence and origin of sin. The whole of the province of moral science would then present itself in the following order:—

- I. Sin, in its essence and origin.
- II. Sin, in relation to man—as moral subject.
- III. Sin, in relation to God—as moral sovereign.
- IV. Sin, in actions.
- V. Sin, in its sequences and annexes.

Let us notice each of these divisions as fully as our limits will permit.

I. Sin, in its essence and origin.

In our previous chapter, we saw that, even in a state of absolute innocence, sin is theoretically contemplated as being possible, as attaching contingently to regulated moral action. The law, for example, is necessarily in both injunctive and prohibitive. And this it is, not in view of sin, but in view of moral freedom. And, in like manner, out of this freedom of the human will as related to law there necessarily arises the *possibility* of sin. The power to obey implies the power to disobey. The power to do right implies the power to do wrong. Capacity for virtue implies, *in posse*, capacity for vice.

And this possibility of sin is only then for the first time annulled when the moral development has reached

its finale in absolute and perfect holiness. While this development is in progress, sin is possible, since that very progression of development may at any time be interrupted, and so come to a prematurely and untimely conclusion <sup>1</sup>.

This possibility also lies, in the opinion of Wuttke, in the finitude or finite character of the human spirit. Under this division it would be necessary to discuss the proper definition of sin; its pre-moral basis, its origin, its essence, and its gradations.

Is there, either on the side of his corporeal or of his spiritual natures, a pre-moral basis of sin in man? Some have pointed to self-love as the source of sin; others, to sense; and others, again, to both in combination. Are these views correct? Would not the existence of a pre-moral basis for sin in human nature reflect upon the wisdom of the Creator? Wuttke thinks so. 'In the moral conception of sin is expressed, that the latter has *not* a sufficient ground in the nature of the rational creature, and must not be apprehended either generally as rational, or as necessary, but only as matter-of-fact <sup>2</sup>.' Hegel <sup>3</sup> describes the Fall as the progression of the rational spirit out of its original mental torpor. Daub <sup>4</sup>, as the transition of the animal into the man—'die Menschwerdung des Thieres;' and Strauss, as 'the transit of the will through evil, inseparable from the idea of the world and of human nature.' Accordingly, by Rothe the moral development of the

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, Handbuch der christlichen Sittenlehre, Bd. ii. § 153. Berlin, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Bd. ii. § 154.

<sup>3</sup> Encykl. § 24. 3; Rel. Philos. (2te Aufl.), i. 268; Rechts-philos. 184.

<sup>4</sup> Theolog. Moral, ii. 227.

human species is regarded as being necessarily abnormal; and that God has not only permitted, but absolutely willed the evil in man as absolutely necessary<sup>1</sup>. Schleiermacher<sup>2</sup>, and many rationalists, find a basis for sin in the fleshly sense, and make much of the contrast between the spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα) and the flesh (ἡ σὰρξ).

Into these matters, however, we cannot enter; neither is it our immediate business so to do. Suffice it that a correct doctrine of sin is of the utmost value to moral science.

Observe—

## II. Sin, in relation to man.

In what way are man's relations altered by sin? In what way is his position altered as a moral subject? And,

### A. *Of individual man.*

Man as an individual is, as we have seen, spirit and body, and the union of both.

#### a. *As to his spirit.*

Is man's spirit in any large degree affected by sin? (1) As percipient and rational, as a personal and self-conscious spirit, in what measure has he been reached by sin? Has his mind been enfeebled or obscured? In his state of innocence he was able clearly to know God, and nature as God's handiwork. His mind was a faithful mirror of the Divine. The image reflected upon it may indeed have been in miniature; but it was nevertheless faithful, true in every line, true in every tint, and true in its ensemble and proportion—

<sup>1</sup> Theolog. Ethik, §§ 475, 495.

<sup>2</sup> System der Sittenlehre, § 91, 109 note.

symmetrical, unique. Is it not far from thus now that sin has entered? Certainly, we think it is. In whatever other respects man's mind has been affected by sin, it has indubitably suffered in respect of its consciousness of God. The consciousness of God in man has been distorted and obscured. (2) As volitional spirit, as possessing moral freedom—how has man been affected by sin? Is he still free? Is he less free in any degree than he was in a state of innocence? Has it suffered subordination, or a tendency to subordination, to evil impulses—the impulses of the fleshly lusts? In what way, too, does the will stand related not only to the emotions on the one hand, but also to the reason upon the other? Similarly, it would be proper to investigate in what manner and to what degree sin has affected (3) man's emotional nature, and especially his conscience or moral sense. Has not sin obscured not only man's consciousness of God, but also his consciousness of right—his sense of the morally good, the morally true, and the morally beautiful? Certainly, such is the fact. Sinfulness is a continuous lie, and deludes mankind even in relation to its own obligations and duties. The sinful man is thus usually a man pre-eminently ignorant of his own moral condition.

*b. Man as body.*

Sin affects man's body as well as his soul; and through his body affects his relations with nature. Disease, pain, and death are consequences of sin affecting man's corporeal part. Is man's sense-knowledge as true as before the Fall? Do the sensations of the body not carry in them an element of discomfort, disagreement with the outer world, disharmony with



nature, such as in their original constitution they did not contain? Man is out of harmony with nature. How much of this discord is subjective rather than objective?

c. Man as both *soul* and *body*.

In what has sin affected the mutual relations of mind to organization? Physical maladies are the result of sin, and mental and moral maladies stand related to the maladies of the body, and especially of the brain.

These and many other questions pertain to the influence of sin upon individual man—an influence which has availed to alter totally his relations as a moral subject.

Similarly, sin may also be considered in relation to

B. *Man as a member of sinful society.*

But into this subdivision we cannot enter.

Observe—

III. Sin in relation to God.

How does God regard sin—God who is the prototype of morality, the upholder of the moral constitution, and the giver of moral law?

Morality, it must be remembered, brings man into relation with God under certain definitive aspects. Man, as made in the image of God, comes as percipient spirit into relation with God as omniscient spirit: as volitional, he is brought into relation with the omnipotent, all-holy will of God; as feeling spirit, as a spirit endowed with a sense of the beautiful, the good, the holy, man comes into relations with God as ever taking delight, emotional delight, in absolute beauty,

absolute truth, absolute right, absolute good, and absolute holiness; and, as a being conscious of moral obligation, man is brought as a moral subject into relations with God, and God into relations with man, as moral ruler, autocrat, and sovereign. These relationships are in all cases reciprocal.

Now in what measure has sin altered these relationships?

1. God as *omniscient* must take cognizance of sin. He cannot be ignorant of its existence. Conversely, man cannot rationally suppose that his sins have escaped the Divine scrutiny.

2. God as volitional—as possessing the supreme will, which is all-holy as well as almighty—is inevitably brought into antagonism with man as a sinner. As the Divine Being takes supreme delight in moral perfection—a perfection which is inherent in His Divine essence—how can He help coming into antagonism with all wills which are unholy. Hence arises a schism between man and God, and between God and man. To will holiness is to unwill unholiness. And by as much as God's will is mightier than man's, by so much is it the more probable that He will annihilate than that He will tolerate evil. This may not be done in time. God is never precipitate. 'One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' But that evil will be completely muzzled, tongue-tied, 'bound hand and foot,' and buried in 'the outer darkness' of eternal oblivion, is as certain as that God's will is a holy will—a will almighty, not only on the side of all goodness, but also and equally so almighty, and that for ever and ever, *against* all evil.

3. God as *emotional* spirit must, in proportion as He loves holiness, hold sin in that selfsame proportion in abhorrence. God's anger against evil is surely something more than a metaphor. His anger is certainly not, like the anger of man, petulant, feeble, and undignified; but comports with His other attributes in Divine propriety, fitness, and dignity.

Man in like manner, if he has not frittered away his religion and his theological convictions by the good help of a hypercritical exegesis of God's Word and the utterances of his own religious consciousness, feels that sin incurs more than a merely frigid, apathetic condemnation upon the part of God, but that it is viewed with feelings—yes, *feelings* of Divine execration and abhorrence.

4. As giver of the moral law, God is compelled—morally compelled—to punish sin. Hence God is by sin led to a further *revelation* of Himself.

This revelation of God may be said to be fourfold.

(1) God reveals supernaturally in His Word the penalties of sin.

(2) God reveals miraculously in extraordinary crises, as in the Noachian deluge and the destruction of the cities of the plain, His anger against sin. He does, as we may say, take especial pains to mark His Divine displeasure, and demonstrate that the penalties appended to sin are more than oriental metaphors.

(3) God reveals naturally through what are called natural sanctions—that is to say, through the ordinary consequences of sin, such as pain, disease, loss of reputation, and the like—sin's penalties already in partial operation.

(4) God reveals through conscience His anger against

sin, and His intention of executing upon the sinner its appropriate award. In a state of innocence, conscience was a joy. It was God's sweet voice within—musical, tender, pathetic—a voice of unspeakable Divine love. After sin, this conscience turned tormentor, and boded to the guilty spirit untold horrors to come. Even so. It is still God's voice. It is God speaking within us and against us. Does such conscience sting us, gnaw at us, and track us whithersoever we may go. Even so. It is still God's monition within us of the certain hell that awaits transgression, of the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched. Surely those who would deny the eternity of torments have never truly listened to this interior revelation of God's mind and will and attitude towards the sin—sin which only men can be infatuate enough to account a trifle.

Observe—

#### IV. Sin in actions.

These are, like moral actions, *interior* and *exterior*. Many exterior acts accounted virtuous, and which, taken apart from their interior source, are certainly good, are, if taken in conjunction with those prior interior acts, indubitably sinful; and conversely. Many sinful acts are wholly inner acts of the soul, inasmuch as that they never get objectivized, put outside a man's own self.

Both interior and exterior sins refer themselves to objects; as—

1. Interior and exterior sins in relation to God.
2. Interior and exterior sins in relation to man.
3. Interior and exterior sins in relation to self.
4. Interior and exterior sins in relation to nature.

Each of these divisions is again subdivisible into sins.

*a.* Sins of omission—of forbearance, or of defect.

*b.* Sins of commission—or sins of trespass.

Here there is an important field of inquiry, into which we reluctantly forbear to enter at any greater length.

Observe—

V. Sin in its consequences and annexes.

Keeping in view the primary subdivision here suggested, we come to speak concerning—

1. The consequences of sin.

These are in turn interior and exterior, and they reach man either in his individual capacity as a moral subject, or in his capacity as a member of society. They are also further divisible into those which reach man in this twofold capacity in time, and those which will reach him in eternity.

Thus to speak—

(i.) Of *interior* consequences of sin.

There are—

*a.* Those which reach him in his individual capacity.

Sins are forces for evil, just as virtues are forces for good. Virtues bring after them joys and capacities for yet higher existence. Vices, each vice in particular, and all vices in their total influence, are equally formative of human nature. They bring after them miseries and woes and torments. There are as many sorts of misery as there are sorts of sin. Each vice has its own exclusive torment, which it knows best how to inflict. And thus with these seeds of a hellish development within him, man gains capacity, gains in height and size: but it is a capacity for misery; his back does but

widen that it may present the larger surface to the lash of the tormentor. This interior retribution is, as endured in this life, twofold—spiritual and bodily; and it is twofold in a similar manner as endured in his individual capacity in the life to come.

Besides then the fact that each vice turns tormentor, we have the penalties attaching to a crooked, ungainly, weird, vicious development of his spiritual and physical natures.

As to his *spiritual* part, he may increase in power to know—but to know what? to know the bitter knowledge of an experience all awry and out of place. Does he learn to know that which alone can exalt his being?—to know God? No: the science in which he becomes expert is the intricate science of a God-forsaken life, the very and indeed science of misery and of despair. He may increase in capacity for pain or pleasure, but it is only that he may find the former as manifold in phase and in form as has been his own transgression. He may increase in volitional capacity; but only that he may will himself farther and farther away from the source of light and joy.

As to his *bodily* part, it allows also of an equally undetermined development. Sense, which at first administered a fictitious pleasure, speedily learns to become tyrannical and bind down the sinner's soul in an embruted and wretched captivity.

There are, however—

b. Those consequences of sin which reach man in his social relationships.

Sin violates his social instincts, and thus makes him, as a member of the family, of society, or of the state, a social victim, making and being made unhappy.

But to speak of the exterior consequences of sin.

(ii.) The *exterior* consequences of sin.

These are to the man himself, for the present, bodily discomfort, disease and death; and so in like manner in the future. To man, as a member of society, the consequences of sin are seen—

*a.* In the disorganization of the family.

*b.* In the disorganization of religious social life, as seen in heathen nations; and, in a modified degree, in the Christian Church, where there frequently works a leaven of malice and unrighteousness.

*c.* In the disorganization—moral disorganization—of states. Revolutions and wars are expressions of sin—are sins in their national issues.

In the life to come these consequences will be aggravated by the utter separation which is to take place between the good and the evil, since in the present life the latter is made by the former to assume an outward appearance that does not belong to it, and is also held by it in real check, and in some sort in statical equilibrium.

We come now to consider—

2. Sin in its *annexes*.

Sin is sin, and as sin it is penal. It is quite true that sin, apart even from its character as an offence against the Divine law, to the infraction of which penalties are attached, may bring after it evil consequences. But it is in the last degree undesirable that sin should not be treated in its true moral character as an infraction of law. Indiscretion and error of judgment frequently bring in their train unpleasant

consequences; and were there no other punishments annexed to the violation of moral law than those which reach the delinquent in the ordinary course of nature, such is his infatuate blindness that he would cease to regard sin as sin. He would regard it rather as only a sort of greater indiscretion—his misfortune and not his fault; and thus would be utterly frustrated all the ends and purposes of moral government.

In order then that sin should appear in its true and real enormity, as a violation of the highest law in the universe, it must be treated as being obnoxious to sanctions,—sanctions which are to be superadded to all the issues and consequences naturally flowing therefrom. And this is the more necessary, since man under extremely favourable circumstances may, by the appliances of wealth and luxury, do very much, in the present life at least, towards the counteraction of the natural and immediate punitive tendency of his delinquencies.

Hence the *annexes* of sin:—the true and proper sanctions of the moral law.

In the future life these annexes, which will be added to all the natural consequences of sin, will constitute the most frightful ingredients of its punishment. Such, for example, will be loss of liberty—‘bind him hand and foot;’ banishment from the presence of God and of all virtuous human society—‘and take him away;’ extrusion from the universe of light and beauty—‘and cast him into *outer* darkness.’ And perhaps the irremediable character of their punishment is also an annex rather than a consequence; for who will have the audacity to say that God is unjust or unkind not to offer redemption *twice*, when He has proffered it



already once, and that once in vain? To redeem too frequently would be no redemption. It would but act as a subsidy—a fund upon which the wicked might draw at pleasure; and so would *not* check, as redemption was intended to check, the further prevalence of sin; but would rather encourage transgression by keeping open continuously a loophole of escape for the transgressor.

## CHAPTER XII.

### MORALITY IN ITS RENOVATION BY REDEMPTION.

WE have now reached the third and last great province of Christian moral science. In our tenth chapter we discussed morality *per se*; in our eleventh we discussed morality in its perversion by sin; and now it remains to us to discuss

#### 3. Morality in its renovation by redemption.

Here a splendid field of ethical investigation is opened up, and one which, if skilfully explored, will yield an El Dorado of Divine thoughts, holy suggestives, and refulgent verities. To our lot at the present, however, it falls, not to dig for its golden treasures, but only to furnish the geology of the subject. We have simply to indicate the whereabouts of the lodes and gems, to plan in view of future operations. Following then the arrangement pursued in the two preceding chapters, with one necessary deviation as to the order of the divisions, we have presented to us the following groups of subjects:—

- I. Redemption in its relation to God.
- II. Redemption in its relation to man.
- III. Redemptive morality in actions.
- IV. Redemptive moral action in its sequences and annexes.

Observe then—

I. Redemption, contemplated as a renewal of the moral life in its relation to God.

Sin is of man. Redemption is of God. Morality in itself presupposes the creation of the rational spirit. Morality in its renovation presupposes the re-creation of man; and just as God is the author of the first creation, so in like manner is He the author of the second.

Hence, since the moral life in its regeneration by redemption reposes entirely upon the act of God, by whom redemption was in the first instance conceived, and from whom it received its initiation and accomplishment, it is proper to treat of redemption, or the moral renovation of man, first in its relations towards God<sup>1</sup>.

In so doing, however, it is highly important to keep in view the actual conditions of the vital problem. Man, in order to his redemption, is not suddenly and violently snatched away from the habitat and domain of sin, neither is he delivered from himself; but he is left in the world as sin has marred it, and in the body which sin has corrupted and depraved. How shall man, while having a nature prone to evil, and while yet dwelling in a sinful world and amid sinful men, be yet taught to live a new life, and of his own free-will crave for deliverance from the bondage of sinful corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God? The moral life has not now to be actualized as in a state of primitive purity, when everything was favourable and even helpful to virtue. No: the moral life with its problems has to be wrought out under harder

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Christl. Sittenlehre*, Bd. ii. § 201, S. 188.

and sterner conditions. It is a far nobler spectacle, a harsher but a sublimer drama, this revival of a pure and exalted spiritual morality and spiritual struggle right in the very home and haunt of sin and pollution. Hence, in the education of mankind into preparedness for redemption, while on the one hand the Almighty is effecting in man a moral transformation, on the other He permits man to bring sin to its issues, in order that by so doing he may be quickened through a painful experience of those issues to a vivid consciousness of the inner discord and contradiction of his being. 'The history of mankind divides itself, in virtue of this twofold Divine government of the world, into a history of heathenism, and a history of the people of God<sup>1</sup>.' In the first, sin discovers itself, its nature and issues. In the second, grace discovers its restorative remedial character, and its adaptation to the necessities, the agonizing necessities, which sin had evoked. And thus is completed man's spiritual education. Sin teaches him his misery. The Gospel points him to the remedy. Just as pain creates at once a consciousness of bodily disease and a desire for restoration to bodily health, even so the smart of sin is permitted in order that it may serve as an incitative to man to seek for spiritual recovery.

Now as to the relation in which God stands to the morality or ethics of redemption, we may remark upon the following topics:—

1. God as volitional spirit.

We saw in our last chapter that the holy will of God is, and ever has been, antagonistic to sin. Does redemption in any wise alter God's will concerning it?

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Christl. Sittenlehre*, Bd. ii. § 203, S. 189.

Certainly not. God is morally immutable. When the law of morality was first promulgated, He willed the punishment of sin by way of proleptic sanction. When sin became actual, it was accordingly made subject to penalties. And now that the Almighty has resolved to redeem the sinner, He has so resolved only in perfect agreement with His eternal will that sin shall not go unpunished.

Hence 'without shedding of blood there is no remission.' Hence the whole doctrine of vicarious sacrifice—of substitution. It is not too much to say that God could not have redeemed man in any other manner,

2. God as emotional spirit.

God as emotional spirit continues under redemption to feel towards sin as He has ever felt. Redemption does not imply a truce between cleanness and uncleanness, between holiness and sin, between absolute good and absolute evil. No. The Almighty, as the gracious, long-suffering, merciful author of the plan of salvation, is in no wise altered—how could He alter?—in His righteous abhorrence of evil. Evil is still that which His soul hateth.

3. God as moral sovereign.

As moral sovereign, as the author of the moral law, with its injunctions and prohibitions, as also with the sanctions thereto annexed, God is, as furnishing a moral foundation for forgiveness of sins, bound to vindicate His law. As in the Gospel forgiveness of sins is proffered, we may know *à priori* that there is also therein contained some form of punitive vindication of the law which had been infracted. If man escapes, it can only be because a fitting substitute for man has been found. A Gospel without punishment of

sin would be *ipso facto* null and void. Atheism itself were more credible, than that with a God there should be a restoration of sinful man to moral and spiritual life, and immunity from the consequences of his transgressions, without an infliction upon a victim—every way as worthy in his single self as a whole race of finite mortals—of those sanctions which are an inseparable part of the essence of the eternal immutable law of right.

But we come to consider the redemptive code as a revelation.

We saw that in the original moral code there was involved a revelation of the Divine will and character. Sin further revealed that character and will in its sterner and more judicial aspects. Even so of redemption. It yet further reveals the nature and character of the Almighty, while it corroborates and confirms all past moral revelations.

The restoration of the moral life in man made indispensable the revelation of a moral code adapted to the exigencies of the case. This revelation may be said to have been made in a fourfold manner.

1. God reveals Himself and His law in the revealed Word.

a. The primitive law is substantially republished in the Decalogue.

b. The new code is also revealed in the Old Testament, typically and prophetically; and yet more explicitly and fully in the New Testament.

The one serves to show man that he has ‘sinned’—‘come short of the glory of God;’ and is designed to conduct by means of this conviction to the easier

conditions and requirements of the other. 'The Law is' thus made 'our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ<sup>1</sup>.'

2. God reveals Himself and His law in Christ's sacred life and person. The eternal prototype of morality is brought nigh to us. Before it was remote. Now it is near. Christ becomes thus the future basis of morality. He discovers to us the moral *idée* in actuality. In Christ Himself God is made manifest; in Christ man is also made manifest:—God as He eternally is in His infinite and absolute perfection; man as he ought to be, and as he will be, when he has reached forth to that gorgeous exaltation set before him through redemption.

Now, with our blessed Saviour Christ before us, 'the moral ideal of man is no longer mere thought, but exists in full personal actuality in Him<sup>2</sup>.' In His life and in His death, in His resurrection and ascension, and in His mediation at the right hand of God and His promise of future judgment, Christ is the noblest, loftiest, purest, sublimest, truest, and most enrapturing revelation of *God* in His eternal power, His impartial equity, and His amazing love and mercy upon the one hand; and upon the other, of *man* in his mental, moral, spiritual, and physical ideality and perfection. In Christ man sees, glowing with life and warmth and freshness and beauty, at once his duty and his destiny.

3. God reveals Himself by the Holy Ghost. Through the Spirit of God, man is enabled to know Christ, and through knowledge of Christ to know the mind and will of the Father.

a. The Spirit revealed God's will by (i.) inspira-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Wuttke, Sittenlehre, Bd. ii. 202.

tion; (ii.) by the miracles and charismata of the early Church.

6. The Spirit reveals God's will within us, day by day.

He makes our bodies the temples of God—restores communion between man and his Maker.

He inspires us with good desires—fills us with love, joy, and peace in believing.

4. God reveals His mind and will through conscience. Conscience always gives its voice for religion. The sinner knows what it is to have the qualms of conscience. As a sinner, conscience is against him. The Christian knows what it is to have conscience once more upon his side. Through conscience he has interior evidence, amounting to ineradicable conviction, that there is truth, eternal, blessed, saving truth, in the doctrines and obligations of the Gospel.

Here then is noble work for the Christian ethicist. If he would have a perfect revelation of morality as it has been refined, spiritualized, sublimatized, and Christianized through redemption, let him methodize and codify the Christian morality of the Old and New Testaments; let him master a thorough and worthy christology; let him write out the inner experiences of true Christian life as upraised and developed by the Holy Ghost, attending meanwhile to the convictions of a conscience which the Gospel has educated, enlightened, and purified.

Observe—

II. Redemption, contemplated as a renewal of the moral life, in its relation to man as a moral subject.

The moral person in Christian morality is essentially different from the natural man still lying under sin.



Christian morality indeed finds him hopelessly embruted by sin, but it does not leave him as it found him. Man as the subject of Christian morality is a being who has been born again—spiritually regenerated by the grace of God. The appropriation of redemption as perfected objectively by Christ takes place only through a spiritual life-development which, while accomplished in man, is not accomplished exclusively by man. This process of development has its basis in God, and contemplates as its ultimate aim the union of the human with the Divine, of man with his Creator and Saviour. The actual appropriation of redemption constitutes therefore, as directed by God the Holy Ghost, a metamorphosis of the natural into the spiritual man, in virtue of which change he regains capacity for the moral life.

A complete Christian anthropology would include—

1. A comprehensive and exhaustive treatment of this Christian transformation.

This should come first, since the entire moral and spiritual life of man as redeemed presupposes this transformation. It would be proper to consider 'conversion' as it stands related to (a) the Divine call; to (b) faith; (c) to repentance; and to other subjective conditions, such as (d) a sense of need of salvation; (e) submission of the human to the Divine will, as seen in a willingness to attend to the requirements of the Christian law of conduct, and a desire for amendment of life. Then (f) there is the dependence of this work throughout upon the subjective operation of the Spirit.

Now this fundamental and preliminary change, renovation, transformation, conversion, having taken place, man is variously affected by the recommencement within him of a life of Christian morality.

He is reached (1) as an individual; and (2) in his social capacity.

(1) As an individual.

The Christian life reaching in its influences to man in his individual capacity, affects him (*a*) as spirit, (*b*) as body, and (*c*) as the union of both.

(*a*) As *spirit*.

As spirit, man is transformed by the life of grace—that is to say, by the moral life Christianized. Man was created originally in the image of God. He is re-created, not only in the image of God, but with a newly-found consciousness of sonship towards God. Hence, this transformation is called a ‘new birth.’ And this spiritual consciousness of relationship towards God is nurtured by the Holy Ghost dwelling within him, and by the outward objective fact that Jesus, the eternal Son of God, is, by virtue of His incarnation, become for all futurity the elder brother of man. Observe that—

(i) As cognitive spirit, man is a vast gainer by Christianity. By sin his consciousness of God was darkened and clouded. In the Christian life the mind is *Divinely* enlightened. He learns to know God as man in his innocence never knew—as even the angels do not know Him. The mind is burnished and brightened and clarified by the truth. Through the stupendous revelations of the Christian dispensation (the Holy Ghost descended from heaven for this very purpose) the mind of the child of God is illuminated, making it far transcend the possibilities of all other conditions of the moral and spiritual development. And this exaltation and illumination and expansion of the mind is illimitably *progressive*.

(ii) As emotional spirit, man undergoes a perfect transformation. His conscience or moral sense is no longer confused, but is purified and spiritualized. As redeemed, he realizes once more the beauties of holiness. As a son of God he feels a sacred yearning after higher life. He perceives once more a lofty ideal after which to reach; but now it is infinitely more exalted and more glorious than that after which man, even in his pristine innocence, could have aspired without audacity and presumption. Men's moral capacities in the redemptive life are, in virtue of their being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, enlarged to an almost incredible degree; and all this comes about in simple agreement with their new and divine vocation. No moral exaltation is too high, too splendid to come at some future period within the actualization of one who is to become 'partaker of the Divine nature.'

(iii) As volitional spirit, man is made spiritually free. Law ceases to be irksome. As a mere moral subject, man must ever have felt the law as a thing over and above him. But he is in the Christian moral life made a son. By degrees he learns to feel, in relation to morality, as God feels. To God morality is not a law; it is a natural condition of His being. God is perfectly holy by absolute necessity. God is also perfectly holy by absolute free choice. And the more God-like man becomes, the more closely does he approximate to this Divine liberty, this unconditional impeccability.

(b) As *body*.

As corporeal, man—the Christian man—does upon earth carry within his fleshly nature the stimulus to sin.

His spirit is never in this life absolutely restored, neither is his body recovered to its original perfection. He is liable to fleshly lusts, to sin in his members, and to those issues of sin, namely, disease, pain, and death.

Still, the corporeal life of the spiritual man is, nevertheless, not entirely analogous to that of the natural man, neither in reference to its actuality, nor to its destination. Since the eternal Logos 'became flesh and dwelt among us<sup>1</sup>,' the bodily life of man has indeed assumed a new value. The body has become an essential part of the redemptive life, and is exalted, together with the soul, into complete and veritable communion with the incarnate Son of God. In like manner the body is sanctified to holy uses, in that it is made 'the temple of God' and of His Spirit 'dwelling in us.' Then, too, there awaits it a resurrection from the dead, and a transfiguration of it into the likeness of Christ's risen and glorified body.

So that to the Christian man the body is now no more an insignificant abode of clay, much less is it a trammel and a burden; but is an organon of the immortal spirit, which, as partaking with it in its immortality, is to be held as for ever holy unto the Lord.

c. Man as union of *body* and *soul*.

The original differences in men, consequent upon the union of body and soul, are clarified in the redeemed. The manifold character of human creation is conserved, and is, within the kingdom of God, held in complete harmony<sup>2</sup>.

(i) Differences of talents and temperaments.

These do not cease in conversion or spiritual re-

<sup>1</sup> John i. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Wuttke, *Christl. Sittenlehre*, Bd. ii. 234.

newal. They are sanctified rather, and subordinated to the service of the kingdom of Christ.

(ii) The sexes.

The two sexes are, upon the one hand, guarded in their legal individuality, while, upon the other, in their moral relations the one with the other they are placed together as of equal birth. The oppression of woman during the dominion of sin is annulled. Woman is thus accorded a place in the Gospel history of the gravest importance, morally considered. 'No religion of the world,' writes Wuttke, 'places women as high as does the Christian religion<sup>1</sup>.'

(iii) The differences of race and nation.

These, again, are not to cease, but are simply to be subordinated to Christian ends; while all races of men, without distinction, are taught to look upon one another as in Christ 'no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God<sup>2</sup>.'

Then man, as living the Christianly moral life, may be contemplated not only as an individual, but also as a member of moral communions. And here he finds thorough scope for the new energies implanted within him.

Thus—

(2) As a social being, the Christian man may be studied under the following typical forms: namely, (1) the family; (2) the church; and (3) the state. Here, too, might be evolved the Christian doctrine of society, or the relation of Christian ethics to the multitudinous facts and phenomena

<sup>1</sup> Wuttke, *Christl. Sittenlehre*, Bd. ii. 235.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 19.

of social life. Why should we not have, to speak briefly, and to borrow a term from our adversaries, a Christian sociology? The ethics of domestic life would furnish the laws and principles which should regulate the primary relations of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister; and next those also of the teacher and the taught. Is there not here noble work? Would it not be a grand achievement if the Christian ethics of home-life and of education could only once be truly enunciated and applied?

The ethics of Church life would prove scarcely less important, as tending to show what the Church is and is not, and what are the fundamental conditions of healthy Church action, and what the true, as contrasted with every artificial and false, basis of ecclesiastical unity.

Political ethics, or Christian ethics in relation to the state, might also subdivide into ethics as related to politics and political philosophy; ethics in relation to political economy; and, thirdly, ethics in relation to jurisprudence, or the philosophy of law.

Observe now—

### III. Christian or redemptive morality in actions.

These are, like moral actions *per se*, and like sins, or acts of moral turpitude, subjective and objective, or *interior* and *exterior*. They also again subdivide: (1) according to the nature of the action, as being one either of act or forbearance; and (2) according to the objects to which the actions (i.e. acts or forbearances) refer themselves.

Thus we obtain:—

*a.* Interior and exterior Christian actions; that is, acts and forbearances in relation to God.

Here is the whole ethics of practical religion,

positive and negative—faith, worship, religious life, the Sabbath, the tithe.

- b. Interior and exterior Christian actions; that is, acts and forbearances in relation to man.

Here again is included, not only all that is ordinarily understood by morality as between man and man, but also, shall we say, the ethics of Christian philanthropy — of mission work considered as a duty from man as Christianized towards man as pagan.

- c. Interior and exterior Christian actions in relation to self.

Here, of course, by 'actions' must be understood both acts and forbearances.

- d. Interior and exterior Christian actions in relation to nature.

Here we have to consider, not only what man *does* or *does not* in respect of the material creation to which he stands related, but also what he *wishes* or *intends* to do or not to do. These latter are his interior or subjective acts or forbearances in relation to nature. Man, by the application of skill and industry to material nature, produces the arts, manufactures, and various other products. This department would evolve ethics as related to this branch of human productivity.

Of course especial stress should be laid upon those actions which have been called into existence by Christianity; while all other moral actions can only be considered in their new and true sense and significance as they are viewed in the light of redemption. The Christian religion has placed all morality on the

highest possible basis. Duties which before had no especial interest attaching to them, gain a novel and remarkable value as placed in relation to the facts and factors of the Gospel.

Observe—

#### IV. Christian or redemptive moral actions in their sequences and annexes.

These are reducible to those which accrue to the Christian as an individual, and those which accrue to the Christian man in his social capacity.

But, first of all, and preliminarily, it would be here necessary to determine the true theory of *Christian* happiness. What is the goal towards which redemption and the Christian moral life and activity are ever pointing man onwards? Wuttke answers, as before, personal perfection<sup>1</sup>. Into that question, however, we cannot enter. We come at once to consider—

1. The consequences of the Christian life to the individual.

These again divide into *spiritual* consequences and *physical* consequences.

##### a. Spiritual consequences.

As all the virtues under the redemptive economy take a peculiarly Christian character and direction, they will, as Christian rather than as being barely ethical *per se*, have appropriate issues. Every Christian virtue has therefore an especial Christian value, considered as a vital and moral force. Hence, therefore, blessings to the soul in its actualization of its sonship to God accrue in forms as manifold and as multitudinous as the possible experiences of the Christian life.

<sup>1</sup> Christliche Sittenlehre, Bd. ii. §§ 270, 449.



Among the *mental* consequences of Christian moral action may be named (*a*) perfect mental development; (*b*) illimitable mental progression; (*c*) the perfection of knowledge—the knowledge of God in Christ and in creation.

Among the *moral* consequences of the new redemptive life may be named summarily—(*a*) perfect moral development; (*b*) illimitable moral progression; (*c*) the perfection of moral knowledge; and (*d*) the perfection of moral enjoyment.

Among the *ethico-religious* consequences of this life may be suggested—(*a*) forgiveness; (*b*) justification; (*c*) sanctification; (*d*) a perfect development of the religious or devotional part of our nature; (*e*) an illimitable religious progression; (*f*) the perfection of religious knowledge; and (*g*) the perfection of religious enjoyment in the perfection of communion with Christ, and through Him with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

#### *b. Physical consequences.*

Among those of the present life may be named—(*a*) the reaction of a renewed soul upon the physical organism, in the direction of health, physical beauty, and spiritualized physical enjoyment; (*b*) the devotion and utilization of the body for spiritual purposes, as affected, on the one hand, by an ennobling spiritual worship, and on the other, by the employment of the body as the organon of the Holy Ghost; (*c*) the new interest which the Christian man, above all others, feels, and has a right to feel, in the contemplation and study of nature.

Of the annexes to this Christian life which reach man in his individual capacity, we may name among those which are spiritual in kind—(*a*) adoption; (*b*) spiritual communion with Christ. Among physical annexes,

may be named—(*a*) the resurrection of the body; (*b*) its transfiguration; and lastly, its exaltation, when reunited to the spirit, to celestial honour and dominion.

Observe—

2. The consequences and annexes of the Christian life to man as *social*.

The Christian life bears fruit upon earth; and both upon earth and in heaven will the happiness and blessedness of the Christian be pre-eminently social, because the Christian life in its highest perfection is one of holy communion with one another, and with Christ the Head.

Christian moral action bears fruit in—

- (1) The family,
- (2) The state, and
- (3) The church.

Even upon earth all the varied relationships of life are sanctified by Christianity. It is only, however, in the life to come that Christianity will reveal itself in all its magnificent proportions and holy fruitions. Then, when family, church, and state shall have lost their distinctive meanings; when, if you would see the one great family in which all are knit together in endearing union, you must see the whole colossal Church of Christ; and if you would see the Church in its resplendent entirety, you must see nothing less than the heavenly polity in which CHRIST—oh name above all other names!—is KING for ever and ever;—then, and not until then, will that renovated moral and spiritual life, begun in lowly penitence at the foot of the Cross, have attained even proximately to the matchless, stupendous, and imperishable individual and social consummation which awaits its actualization in the future life. Then,

when mortality shall be swallowed up of life; when man shall have risen up perfect—a perfect member of a perfect whole, mentally, morally, physically, and relationally perfect; when the whole mighty concourse of the redeemed, out of every people, kindred, tribe, and tongue, shall, as one polity, one family, one holy catholic and undivided Church, sing the new song—‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;’—then, and only then, can man hope even proximately to realize the grandeur and splendour of the ultimate issues of REDEMPTION, ‘the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.’

But there is yet another aspect of the issues and annexes of the Christian moral law. Under redemption the moral law was re-published and re-conditioned. It inaugurated a new era in morals. Therefore, to the law, as thus re-published and re-conditioned, will there not attach as to morality *per se* true and proper sanctions?

We have seen in our last chapter what are the penalties annexed to an infraction of the primitive code. Are there no especial sanctions—sanctions created in especial view of Christianity, sanctions contemplating a new species of guilt and transgression, to wit, the rejection even of Christ—pertaining to this new, this redemptive code of morality?

Most assuredly there are. And to the ethicist it must be interesting to have clearly identified and set apart as Christian sanctions those penalties which are being inflicted, and will at the day of judgment be inflicted, upon those who have transgressed the requirements of the law of Christ.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### CONCLUSION.

HERE, then, we have furnished in outline the entire province of Christian moral science. Such a science, properly constructed, is more than the work of one individual man. If ever it is to be evolved, it must be done, not by desultory individual effort, but by the associated genius and talent of Christian lands. This is a scientific age; and an age, at the same time, of daily-increasing unbelief. Men's minds are undergoing a gradual process of alienation from the faith of Christ. Why is this? Is there not that in Christianity which is calculated to inspire in the loftiest created intelligences the sincerest and profoundest veneration? Is not Christianity Divine? and is not its morality matchless in its exalted purity, its inornate beauty, its spiritual sublimity?

Why is it not, then, the religion of the world? How comes it to pass that men of thought are learning to look coldly upon it? It is not, and cannot be, the fault of a religion which is all of God. The true explanation of this phenomenon must be sought elsewhere. It must be sought in the stiff, unscientific, dogmatic form in which the truths of this religion

have been presented. Men are becoming tired of systems, and catechisms, and formules, and why? Because the most beautiful and most enrapturing of faiths is under these forms not truly systematized, but is presented in a repulsive and unworthy manner. Christianity is lost under denominationalism and ecclesiasticism. What this age wants is, that it may once more see the face of Christ. It wants the truth, the life, the light; and not the nostrums and conventionalisms of this or that creed or confession.

Now agreement in Christian dogmatics may perhaps be hopeless in the present life. But here all Christians are and ought to be agreed. They may all agree to admire the resplendent ethics of redemption. And why may they not therefore co-operate to build up into noble and gorgeous proportions the science of Christian morality. If this were done, even scoffers would stand abashed. Comte, an avowed atheist, can allow that morality crowns the encyclopædic scale—the theoretic hierarchy of the sciences; that it is its acme and climax. Let this *magnum opus*, then, be achieved. We all know the value of the principle of association, and the economic division of labour. In our own country there are earnest thinkers—men who, in their noble Christian sympathies, are head and shoulders above their generation with its theological factions and rivalries. In Germany there are Christian ethicists of superlative merits, as a Wuttke, a Harless, a Dorner, and a Neander; not to name many others. In that arena of daring speculation the national mind is gradually coming round to the pure truths of the Gospel. Since, then, all is ripe for union, let Christian unity be accomplished. Let the noble Association now

in process of formation gather into itself all the best brain and heart of Christendom, and unite them on the broad and eternal basis of Christian morality. And let this scoffing and superstitious age be shown that Christianity, when presented as only sanctified and Christianized genius and talent can present it, is a praise and a glory in all the earth.

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## SYNOPSIS OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

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### I. PRIMORDIAL ETHICS.

- i. ANTHROPOLOGICAL ETHICS; or, Ethics in relation to the whole doctrine concerning man; and in relation to man himself, as individual and social.
- ii. THEOLOGICAL ETHICS; or, Ethics in relation to the whole doctrine concerning God; and in relation to God Himself, as moral prototype, lawgiver, and sovereign.
- iii. ETHICS OF PRACTICE; or, Ethical actions considered *per se*. The primitive code.
- iv. SANCTIONAL ETHICS; or, Ethics of retribution, as seen in the sequences and annexes of moral action. The theory of happiness. Eudæmonism in relation to morality.

N.B. Each subject may be considered (1) *dogmatically*, or in relation to the positive teaching of *facts* and of Holy Scripture; and (2) *polemically*, or in relation to the errors and heresies which have prevailed respecting such individual subject. The relation of dogma to duty.

### Speculative or Philosophical Ethics.

## II. THE ETHICS OF SIN; *or, Morality in its Perversion by the Fall.*

### i. ANTHROPOLOGICAL ETHICS OF SIN.

#### (1) Dogmatically considered:—

- |                        |   |                                                                                   |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Man indi-<br>vidually. | { | a. Sin in relation to history.                                                    |
|                        |   | b. Sin in relation to psychology.                                                 |
|                        |   | c. Sin in relation to physiology, or the physical organization of man.            |
|                        |   | d. Sin, its relation through man with the material creation.                      |
| Man socially.          | { | a. Sin, its relation to man as social: 1. Family; 2. School; 3. Church; 4. State. |

#### (2) Polemically considered:—

- a. History, classification, and discussion of false anthropologies, or false views concerning man, in their relation to ethics:—
  - a. heathen systems;
  - b. systems of speculative error and unbelief.

### ii. THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF SIN.

#### (1) Dogmatically considered:—

- a. Sin in relation to theological dogma.
- b. Sin in relation to God Himself, as moral prototype, lawgiver, and sovereign. God's will in relation to sin as revealed in—
  - a. history;
  - b. Scripture; and
  - c. conscience.

#### (2) Polemically considered:—

- a. History, classification, and discussion of false theologies — atheisms, pantheisms, non-Trinitarian theisms, deism, ditheism.

### iii. ETHICS OF PRACTICE IN RELATION TO SIN; *or, Sinful Action considered per se.*

#### (1) Dogmatically considered:—

- a. Exterior actions (acts and forbearances) of culpability
  - a. towards God, in respect of worship;
  - b. towards man;
  - c. towards self;
  - d. towards nature.
- b. Interior actions (acts and forbearances) of culpability. Essence and origin of sin.

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**Practical or Applied Ethics.**

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**II. THE ETHICS OF SIN; *or, Morality in its Perversion by the Fall.*****i. ANTHROPOLOGICAL ETHICS OF SIN.**

- a. Collection and comparison of facts in history, psychology, and physiology, cognate to the inquiries of the section.
- b. Collation and comparison of Holy Scripture.
- c. Application of the facts and principles educed to beneficial uses.
- d. Collation and comparison of facts in relation to false anthropologies.

**ii. THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF SIN.**

- a. Collation and comparison of Scripture.
- b. Collection and comparison of the facts of history and conscience as furnishing a revelation of God's will regarding sin.
- c. Collation and comparison of facts in relation to false theologies—atheism, pantheism, deism, ditheism.

**iii. ETHICS OF PRACTICE IN RELATION TO SIN; *or, Sinful Action considered per se.***

- a. Codification of *exterior* sins: with collation of Scripture.
  - a. Best practical modes of repression. Organizations.
- b. Codification of *interior* sins: with collation of Scripture.
  - a. Best practical modes of suppression. Formation of public opinion.



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### Speculative or Philosophical Ethics.

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(2) Polemically considered:—

- a. History, classification, and discussion of the errors and heresies relating to the nature and fact of sin as bearing upon ethical inquiry.

#### iv. SANCTIONAL ETHICS; *or, The Ethics of Retribution.*

(1) Dogmatically considered:—

- a. The natural sequences of sin.
- b. The annexes of sin.
- c. General doctrine of rewards and punishments. Sin as interfering with the law or laws of happiness.

(2) Polemically considered:—

- a. History, classification, and discussion of errors and heresies relating to sanctional ethics.
- 

### III. THE ETHICS OF REDEMPTION; *or, Morality in its Renovation by Christ.*

#### i. ANTHROPOLOGICO-CHRISTIAN ETHICS; *or, Christian Ethics in the light of the whole Christian Doctrine concerning Man.*

(1) Dogmatically considered:—

- |                                            |   |                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Man indi-<br>vidually.                     | { | a. Redemption in relation to history.                                             |
|                                            |   | b. Redemption in relation to psychology, or the philosophy of the human spirit.   |
|                                            |   | c. Redemption in relation to man's physical organization.                         |
|                                            |   | d. Redemption in its relation through man with the material creation.             |
| Man<br>socially.                           | { | a. Christian sociology, or the ethics of redemption in relation to man as social. |
|                                            |   | a. the Family;                                                                    |
|                                            |   | b. the Church;                                                                    |
|                                            |   | c. the State.                                                                     |
| Christian social statics. Social dynamics. |   |                                                                                   |

(2) Polemically considered:—

- a. History, classification, and discussion of false anthropologies. Their disadvantageous influence upon morality, as part of the demonstration that Christian anthropology, or the Christian doctrine concerning man, individual and social, is alone in harmony with the eternal principles of ethics.

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### Practical or Applied Ethics.

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- c. Collation and comparison of facts calculated to help to a history of errors and heresies relating to sin, considered in their bearing upon ethical inquiry.

#### iv. SANCTIONAL ETHICS; *or, The Ethics of Retribution.*

- a. Codification of the natural sequences of sin. Collation of Scripture.  
 b. Codification of annexes. Collation of Scripture.  
 c. Collection and comparison of facts calculated to help to a history of errors and heresies on sanctional ethics.  
 d. Best modes of awakening men's minds to the sanctional character of individual and national suffering.
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### III. THE ETHICS OF REDEMPTION; *or, Morality in its Renovation by Christ.*

#### i. CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN RELATION TO MAN.

- |                        |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Man indi-<br>vidually. | { | <p>a. Collection of facts and statistics.</p> <p>b. Discussion of the best modes of applying the principles and facts of Christian moral science to man as an individual. Schemes of propagandism. Principle of association.</p> |
|------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- |                  |   |                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Man<br>socially. | { | <p>a. Application of the principles of Christian sociology —to the elevation of the family, of education (the school), of the Church, and of the nation.</p> |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- a. Best modes of repressing the errors and heresies of anthropology considered as antagonistic to Christian ethics.

### Speculative or Philosophical Ethics.

#### ii. THEOLOGICO-CHRISTIAN ETHICS; *or, Christian Ethics in relation to Theology.*

##### (1) Dogmatically considered:—

- a. Christian ethics in relation to theological dogma.
- b. Redemptive morality in relation to God Himself as a person—as moral prototype, lawgiver, and sovereign—and as triune. Christian moral law: its basis, form, and compass. Law as a revelation.

##### (2) Polemically considered:—

- a. History, classification, and discussion of false theologies—atheisms, pantheisms, polytheisms, deism, ditheism, as related to the doctrine of redemption.

#### iii. CHRISTIAN ETHICS OF PRACTICE; *or, Christian Moral Action per se.*

##### (1) Dogmatically considered:—

- a. Exterior actions (acts and forbearances) of Christian morality—
 

Theory of Christian rectitude.	{	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. towards God, as triune—worship;</li> <li>b. towards man;</li> <li>c. towards self;</li> <li>d. towards nature.</li> </ul>
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- b. Interior actions (acts and forbearances) of Christian morality—
 

Theory of Christian virtue.	{	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. towards God—love, faith, worship, &amp;c.;</li> <li>b. towards man;</li> <li>c. towards self;</li> <li>d. towards nature.</li> </ul>
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#### iv. CHRISTIAN ETHICS OF RETRIBUTION; *or, The Consequences and Annexes of Christian Moral Action.*

- a. Natural sequences to man: 1. as individual, 2. as social.
- b. Annexes to man: 1. as individual, 2. as social.
- c. Christian theory of happiness. Christian eudæmonics as related to Christian ethics.

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**Practical or Applied Ethics.**

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**ii. CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN RELATION TO GOD.**

- a. Collection of facts and statistics.
- b. Best modes of impressing upon the public mind the importance of Christian dogma as fundamental to morality.
- c. Best agencies, organizations, and forms by which to meet and combat false theologies—as atheism, pantheism, monotheism (as opposed to Trinitarian theology, both as European deism and Asiatic Mahometanism), ditheism.

**iii. CHRISTIAN MORAL ACTION *per se*.**

- a. Collection of facts.
- b. Collation of the Scriptures.
- c. Codification of exterior acts and forbearances of the Christian code towards—1. God, 2. man, 3. self, 4. nature.
- d. Codification of interior acts and forbearances of the Christian code.
- e. Best modes of the presentation and enforcement of the information thus obtained.
- f. Best modes of meeting and combatting all anti-Christian ethics of practice.

**iv. CHRISTIAN ETHICS OF RETRIBUTION.**

- a. Collection of facts and statistics.
- b. Best modes of applying the information eduved to the benefit of man, individual and social.
- c. Best modes of reviving belief in the doctrines of sanctional ethics.
- d. Best modes of meeting and repressing errors in this department of ethics.



ESSAY. IV.

NATIONAL RELIGION.

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- VI. Probable Objections considered and answered.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.—THE PLACE OF THE PROPOSED CHRISTIAN MORAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

THE great end sought by our Lord in His present rule on earth is the redemption and regeneration of mankind. Whatever the final issue of His purpose, in its progress it will assume the form of general evangelization. And that work will be effected when every responsible human being is acquainted with the glad tidings of Christ, is subjected to the influence of Christianity with its saving power, and is socially and politically free to obey the Gospel and to exercise the Christian religion. Whatever may be the issue as to the actual salvation of each person then living, it is maintained that such general salvation is the dispensational end viewed by our Saviour, and that that end is as possible as it is desirable. It is the subject of His intercession: 'Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.' And it is the clear promise of God, 'That unto Christ every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess;' and 'that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea<sup>1</sup>.'

<sup>1</sup> Ps. ii. 8; Isa. xlv. 23; xl. 9.



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Such, then, is the great end viewed by our Lord. In the accuracy of this representation the entire evangelical Church is agreed; whether, individually or sectionally, it be supposed that this great work will be accomplished by the present means and resources of the Christian Church, or that it can only be secured by the visible personal advent of Christ in the inauguration of the millennium: such advent to take place when the Gospel shall have been universally preached as a testimony unto the nations.

But this great final work must obviously be attempted from vital centres of Christian life: the work will be from within outwards. 'Ye shall testify of Me in Jerusalem and Judea, in Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.' First the individual Christian; next the Christian home and local Church; then the nation subjected to the leaven of Christianity; and, in the end, the aggregate of the nations—the world.

It will thus be seen that national religion, or the evangelization of nations, is an intermediate and necessary stage in the progress of the Christianization of mankind.

National Christianity will be secured when the nation is evangelized in the sense already defined. The work cannot properly be said to be done until the nation is marked by the general prevalence of true religion in personal, domestic, and political life. Then Christianity will pervade the national spirit, embodying itself in legislation, in education, and in the entire life of the nation. Thus national religion will be secured in proportion to the degree in which the nation as a whole becomes thoroughly Christian.

It is felt that great misconception prevails as to the form which national religion must assume. It is neither unjust nor illiberal to say, that the Romish Church seeks to promote national religion by making the people 'good Catholics.' The Established Church would consider the nation Christian if the vast majority of the people were 'good Churchmen.' While the evangelical Free Churches, whatever their best aspirations, would hold the nation to be Christian were it filled with the several classes of good denominational men.

But to make the nation Christian after a merely ecclesiastical or denominational pattern would not necessarily be to evangelize it; and even were it so evangelized, its Christian life would not be of the most exalted type. To secure national religion in the sense desiderated, the great body of the people must become individually Christianized: whilst a nation whose main body would be formed of such persons would find its entire condition elevated above all present conceptions.

To secure national religion, then, may be called the secondary end viewed by Christ as a part of the larger work, and a stage towards its final accomplishment. He is 'a Light to lighten the nations.' 'All nations shall call Him blessed<sup>1</sup>.'

It is our duty now to inquire, By what means does our blessed Saviour intend to accomplish His great purpose in whole and in part?

He is Himself the great worker. In this, as in preliminary achievements, His own arm brings Him

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxii. 17.

salvation. He is represented, is again present in His Church, in the Holy Spirit now 'poured out on all flesh.' That is, the Spirit of Christ, 'proceeding from the Father and the Son,' is the great gift of the Son, as He was the promise of the Father. Christ baptizes in the Holy Ghost and fire. The Saviour Himself by His Spirit is the great worker, 'convincing' and converting the world.

But He uses instruments and means. His instruments are human beings who are the subjects of His great salvation. By saved men as His instruments He operates on the world. He is, in the visible sense, 'not here;' He is 'gone away,' 'gone to the Father,' as He said, and as it was 'expedient for us' He should do. He is present now spiritually and invisibly, in a delocalized sense, by His Holy Spirit whom He promised as 'another Comforter,' but who also is the fulfilment of His promise, 'I will come to you,' 'I will come again.' All therefore is spiritual, and spiritual in every sense: not material and visible, not secular and directly appreciable by the world. Yet His work here is to convince and convict the world, so material, visible, and secular. Through what instruments and by what methods, then, does He so influence a material, visible world, as to achieve within it His work?

We reply, By saved men, forming local Christian societies or Churches, dwelling in the nation, and forming there the Church in the world.

Each Christian is a living shrine in whom Christ dwells—a living stone in the great temple of His Church built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; in which temple Christ dwells in a fuller incarnation, 'God manifest in the flesh.' This 'body,'

His visible Church, animated by Himself as her great Soul, is the visible organ used by Him to achieve His beneficent purpose in this visible world.

The Christian Church, then, is our Lord's great human instrument, in evangelizing mankind. Her existence; her edification in love; her quiet, unostentatious testimony—the gentle, suasive force of godliness, which is as a light shining across the darkness, and makes its shrine as ‘a city set on a hill that cannot be hid,’—these bear witness for Christ, soften down prejudice, attract converts, and cause men, as trophies of His grace, to glorify the great Father in heaven.

Nor this quiet testimony only, but that aggressive testimony of the Gospel which is ‘preaching’ in its most pregnant sense. She does ‘the works of Christ’ in their deeper, larger meaning, opening blind eyes, cleansing the leprous, bringing to life the dead, and preaching the Gospel to the poor. Thus in her entire work is she fulfilling her great commission, ‘Go ye into all the world, converting the nations,’ ‘for, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world<sup>1</sup>.’

But further, what are the means employed by the Church, or by the Lord through His Church, in order to the successful discharge of her mission? There must be such means, or the testimony of the Church will be powerless. They are (1) the subject-matter of the testimony she bears; and (2) the motive or force which, making that testimony successful, wins the hearer to his Saviour as a trophy of grace.

The subject-matter of the Church's testimony is ‘the truth as it is in Jesus,’ as revealed in Holy Scripture. This is the great means of human conversion. The

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 20.

truth is 'able to save our souls.' By 'the word of truth' Christians are 'begotten of God' in regeneration. And in our progressive redemption it is 'the truth' that 'makes us free.' Hence the pertinence and force of our Lord's double exhortation, 'Take heed *what* you are hearing,' for it is a word that can 'save' you, and for hearing which you are held responsible; 'Take heed *how* you hear,' for on *that* will depend your subjection to its power<sup>1</sup>.

That truth or word, then—the 'seed of the kingdom to be sown broadcast on the nations—comprises two departments of teaching. The first, all that is embraced in Christian dogmatics; the second, all that is included in Christian ethics. These two departments of 'truth,' though not identical, are dependent on and supplement each other. Such is the subject-matter of the Church's testimony for Christ, exemplified in her life as it is exhibited in her preaching.

But a motive or force is necessary to make that truth effective to the spiritual renovation of men: a power that shall be mightier than the evil within man; that shall so far make the truth successful as actually to 'write it upon his heart,' and enshrine there his God. Whatever this force may be, it will be like Christ Himself, 'the power of God unto salvation.'

Now such force is supplied in the 'grace' or influence of the Holy Ghost, who equally fills with life the 'seed' and prepares the heart of the hearer: while the desiderated motive is found in that faith wrought by the Holy Ghost, and which works by love. This is a power, objective and subjective, which secures in every believer the acceptance of 'the truth as it is in Jesus,'

<sup>1</sup> Mark iv. 24; Luke viii. 18.

his personal surrender in trust to Christ as his Saviour and Lord, and his entire subjection to the obligations of Christian duty.

Thus then does Christ, the great worker, achieve His beneficent purpose; which is cherished, as both instruments and means, with the sphere of their operations, are embosomed, in His providence. Thus too, in a dispensational sense, the Father is 'giving' to the Son the 'heathen for His inheritance;' whilst 'all that the Father giveth Him shall come to Him; and him that cometh He will in no wise cast out<sup>1</sup>.'

It will be apparent that the end already defined as viewed by our Lord, is necessarily the end to be sought by His Church. It should be contemplated in all her organizations and in all her work. This is, in fact, the common end to be recognised and attempted by every individual, each local society, every evangelical communion, as the several parts making up the one Visible Church of Christ.

But *is* that Church actually contemplating and deliberately directing her efforts, in whole or in part, to that end? Is every ecclesiastical body, every Christian society, each Christian person, skilfully using its or his resources as the well-planned means to that end?

It is, unhappily, impossible to reply to these questions in the affirmative. They are answered in the present aspect of the Church and of her work. To the eye of her foes she appears fundamentally and hopelessly divided, since she is broken up into separate communions, having little external uniformity. Her instruments and means are apparently as denominational as they are Christian; while her efforts seem

<sup>1</sup> Psalm ii. 8; John vi. 37.

put forth to evangelize the nation indeed, but to do this after her own present image and likeness. Accordingly she is largely wasting her resources, spiritual, moral, and material: while her attempts, in character, power, and result, are represented in the present state of the Church, the nation, and the world.

It is not denied here that the results of the Church's work are great. But can it be said that they are satisfactory? The present condition of the British people, with the aspect of British Churches in relation to them, is our sufficient reply. We shall have occasion presently to examine the evidence in detail. But the obvious condition of the nation compels us to admit, that the Church's work in this country is not being achieved, nor as yet in the best sense being thoroughly attempted.

There are, then, plainly great deficiency, corruption, and waste of power in present organizations, instrumentalities, and efforts. At best every existing arrangement is provisional; as even the best attempts are only partial. No intelligent Christian can wish or hope that things shall remain as they are. Something is wanted: what is it? A crisis is approaching, in which ecclesiastical readjustments may lead to complete evangelical adaptation to the work which Christ has given to His Church to accomplish.

What is now wanted is an intermediate organization, that will enable the Church, without disturbing present ecclesiastical arrangements, to contemplate in united thought and purpose her great work, and to attempt its entire achievement with united, economized resources.

Such an organization is proposed—'after much inquiry and prayerful consultation, in simple dependence

on the Divine help and favour'—in the Christian Moral Science Association. Its Prospectus will be found on pp. v, vi. While the need for such an Association, the great work assigned to it, and the immense advantages to be expected from its successful working, are to be hereafter discussed.

In such an Association it is possible for the visible Church to appear in true catholic unity. As one body of Christ she can here cultivate, can adequately discuss, and present to the nation her common basis of axiom and inference in Christian ethics. Notwithstanding present defective ecclesiastical arrangements, she could here, with more efficient unity, apply this moral science to the life of individuals and Churches, the nation, and the world: Thus realizing at length the great purpose of her Lord, she would be wisely adapting herself and her resources to its entire achievement.

So much is at least possible. The difficulties in its way have not been overlooked; but we are confident they will disappear in the progress of the scheme. Uniting in such Association, then, occupying its common platform, and engaging in its common work, let the whole Christian family await that time when its unity shall be fully manifested. Then will the Saviour's prayer be answered<sup>1</sup>: 'That they may be One, even as We are One: I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.'

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 22, 23.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE NECESSITY FOR A CHRISTIAN MORAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

IN defining the place, we have suggested the need, of a Christian Moral Science Association. It will be important, however, to inquire into that necessity in greater detail, that its consideration may be the more urgently pressed on the Christian conscience of the Churches. We therefore propose to examine the condition of the nation, with a view to ascertaining the degree in which the present separate efforts of the Christian Churches are succeeding in Christianizing the people. Those efforts are such as are being now put forth by the several Churches, mainly independent of each other, through their separate ecclesiastical and denominational organizations. We inquire, What is the result of such efforts? Can these Churches contemplate with satisfaction the measure of success attending their work? Are they really and increasingly evangelizing the country? These questions will be answered as we take a general survey, brief but careful, of the condition of the British people; for only thus can we show to what extent the whole people are being influenced by the principles of Christianity.

No thoughtful Christian will hesitate to confess that

the nation as a whole is in a deplorable condition. We by no means forget the immeasurable good that has been achieved, that is now being effected, by the Christian Church, through all her organizations, in her never-failing preaching and instruction, by means of her religious life, individual and corporate, and through every department of her evangelical work. Nor do we overlook the vast mitigations of sin and misery, the great ameliorations of the national condition, being effected by the combined religion and philanthropy of the country. But, with all gratitude to God for this, it is no less true that the state of the people, as a whole, is in every important respect most unsatisfactory and disappointing. In describing that general condition, we shall of course be chiefly concerned with its sad and deplorable side ; but we feel assured of the truthfulness of our representations, and that they ought to rouse the Christian conscience of England to their consideration.

The degree in which the British people are or are not subjected to Christianity, may be seen if we consider their condition in its intellectual, religious, social, and physical aspects.

I. The intellectual state of this country may be tested by the condition of its moral science. The former cannot rise above the latter, any more than the stream can rise above its source. In proportionate degree will Christianity pervade and influence the ethical science and the intellectual state of any given people. What, then, is the present state of moral science in this country?

Moral science is distinguished from other sciences in that, while they treat of what *is*, this deals with what

*ought to be* in man. The term denominates the scientific treatment of the nature and value of moral distinctions, and represents the sum of our knowledge in the department of morals. The technical use of the term 'moral science' is usually confined to those ethical inquiries that are conducted on what is assumed to be the 'purely scientific method,' and in a so-called 'truly philosophic temper.' Usually dominated by a philosophy either rationalistic or materialist, such science is pure naturalism, or an interpretation of the natural without regard to the supernatural. The philosophers in question treat ethics independently of revelation, which is assumed to be not even needed. They 'regard their department as a science complete in itself,' apart from Christianity. That is to say, *man as he is*, without the light thrown on his condition from other than natural sources, is the sole field of inquiry; and the investigations purport to be made without bias from prepossessions, ethical or religious, that may exist in the breast of the inquirer.

Christian ethics is moral science corrected and completed by the application of Christianity. The laws, facts, or phenomena cognized by ethics are accordingly treated in relation to sin and to the regeneration of the moral life through the redemption effected by Christ. In Christian moral science, therefore, the facts of Christianity itself are received as indispensable data; the revelation in its genuine, authentic, authoritative documents, with the influences and forces, the 'help' afforded to man in his discharge of duty in the 'grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.' To treat ethics otherwise than as Christian is, from our own point of view, unscientific, limiting as it does the proper field

of inquiry, by excluding what may prove to be the most important data.

Yet this is what has been done, and continues to be done, in this country, in the pursuit of ethical inquiry. Christian moral science indeed scarcely exists here. In Scotland the state of the science may be a little better; but in England it is in a deplorable condition of poverty and misdirection. Accordingly the Christian Church here, united as she is in Christian principle, is without a common basis of ethical science which she can apply to the individual Church and the nation.

In the University of Cambridge moral philosophy is practically neglected, the occupant of its chair being the Professor of Casuistry! The main text-book at Oxford is Aristotle, the Ethics of a heathen philosopher who wrote before the advent of our Saviour! With this, indeed, some years ago Butler's works were associated as the only practicable supply of the Christian element in this study. But more recently, we regret to find, Butler is superseded by less Christian and even unchristian books. The fruits of such arrangements are, alas! sufficiently apparent.

But even Butler's is an incomplete system, considered as Christian ethics, though our admiration of his works has suffered no abatement. Writing, as he did, to meet a temporary phase of infidelity, he only presents the part of man's moral nature necessary to his argument. He substantially overlooks the intellectual aspect of ethics. To the consideration of faith as a conviction of truth, filling and dominating the intellect, sinking into the heart, and thence ruling the conduct, is given at best a very uncertain place. Thus even Butler's is manifestly incomplete; while

since his time moral science has scarcely progressed in this country.

The field is practically abandoned to the utilitarian and the intuitionist, but conditioned by the influence of the positivist and the physicist. The latest phase of the utilitarian theory is an important modification of that known as the Selfish System. The latter made the test of virtue the happiness of its agent; the motive to virtuous action, desire of the pleasure it would secure. But this limitation of happiness to the agent has been abandoned as untenable, and now general utility is the substituted standard of morals. Thus the criterion of rightness in actions is said to be their tendency to promote the general wellbeing or happiness. It is no part of our present duty to enter upon a refutation of the utilitarian philosophy, which, indeed, has received a severe blow from Mr. Lecky in the introductory chapter to his 'History of Morals.'

Yet a little reflection will show that this theory not only ignores the revelations of Christianity, but it accounts neither for the moral Governor of our race, nor for His law, nor for any true obligation of man to either. Thus, pushed to its issues, utilitarianism must land its votaries in atheism.

Nor is the intuitionist in a better position. His test of rightness is the instinctive preferences with which he regards certain actions, and a consciousness of obligation to perform them, which together incline him *à priori* to what is right.

Thus *man as he is* is accepted as in a normal condition, whilst all external authority and influence are excluded. The fact that the intuitional theory admits of considering the history of morals independently of

Christianity, condemns it as being without a sense of true obligation, of an external moral law, and of the Lawgiver—the great moral Ruler of the universe. But such being the case, how can the intuitionist escape atheism as his final issue?

While, however, the field may be popularly described as practically abandoned to the intuitionist and the utilitarian, these are being assailed, and the entire field of ethics being menaced, by the progress of materialism pure and simple. The advocates of this materialism form two sections: the positivist, and that class of physicists represented by such men as Professor Huxley.

The adherent of Comte's positive philosophy is necessarily atheistic, and can therefore have no true morality to inculcate. The development of his general principles reaches the conclusion that God is the creature of imagination; that light, gravity, electricity, heat, thought, will, are mutually convertible forces; that the mind is but a continuation of thought, i. e. a succession of cell-growths in the brain; that volition is necessitated, being the result of force-currents in the brain; in fine, that the superstitious ideas of God and the creation of all things by Him, the soul, heaven and hell, sin and repentance, the resurrection and the judgment, all vanish with ghosts and fairies. It is in perfect consistency, then, that with the positivist the authority of conscience, or the sense of obligation, is the impressions of pleasure collected by experience and brought to bear in the form of constraint upon individuals by law and social opinion; all thought, feeling, and action being but modes of molecular activity. How utterly godless and antichristian this is, we need

not say. Yet this is supposed to be a formidable rival to the ethical theories already described, and is expected by its votaries to win the adhesion of mankind!

But not in positivist form only is materialism threatening the whole realm of ethical science, and, with that, Christianity itself. The favourite study of the age is the pursuit of natural knowledge. Minds devoted to physical inquiry are assuming an imperious, scornful aspect towards everything calling itself science that is not material. They say in effect that the science of matter is the only true science. In its intenser form this spirit, as we have seen, is embodied in the positive philosophy. But in its milder form it finds expression in the words of Professor Huxley<sup>1</sup>, 'All thought is but the expression of molecular changes in the physical matter of life. As surely as everything future grows out of past and present, so with the physiology of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law, until it is coextensive with knowledge, with feeling, with action.' Thus to the keen, imperious minds of the physicists, there is no room for angel, or spirit, or God; there is no such thing as immaterial mind, or even conscience. As for spirit, they have never seen it. Mind, they tell you, is but the form in which certain kinds of material force exert themselves. And conscience is only the peculiar action of nervous sensibilities, having no reference to a moral governor of the world.. 'All thought,' in fact, again, 'is but the expression of molecular changes in the physical matter of life!'

<sup>1</sup> Fortnightly Review, 1869.

Here, then, we see the condition of ethical science in England. At best, we have Aristotle modified by Butler; an ethical system that is vigorously assailed by utilitarian and intuitionist philosophy; while these again are conditioned by avowed materialism in physicist and positivist forms. Accordingly, the national intellect is seething in these conflicting, mutually destructive systems; and the Christian Church has no properly tabulated Christian ethics to present! Is there not most urgent need, then, that she unite her forces in a common Association for the cultivation of Christian moral science? For this ample materials exist; and to this every conceivable inducement is urging. Such science was never more needed than now. And when a thorough, masterly system shall be presented to the nation, and brought to bear upon the inevitable controversies of our time, the portentous infidelity and spurious theology so rife will be met and overcome.

It is not surprising to find the general intellectual state of the country—expressed in its literature and breathed in its spirit—in full consistency with the state of its ethical science. The spirit of the age, even in England, is rationalistic, modified by materialism. The ultimate decision in the court of final appeal in every case is, the judgment of human reason.

No recognition is made of the possible insecurity of both test and standard, of the limitation of human faculty, or of the depravity of man, his conscience, and his entire moral nature. But, just as he is, man sets himself up as the one infallible judge, to whose bar all persons and things may be summoned, and from whose judgments there is no appeal! Nor is this an



exaggeration of the rationalistic position, since even the Deity—His attributes, His government, His existence—is subjected to rationalistic treatment. Under the false guise of seeking truth by a proper exercise of the reason, man thus assumes to be the judge of God, when his only proper place is to be prostrate before His throne, in entire subjection of reason and conscience to His rule.

This modern spirit, so rationalistic, is nothing if not critical. Everything is drawn into its capacious maw, and subjected to its remorseless processes. Not a question in theology escapes being dealt with and turned out of its crucible in most fantastic guise. Whilst, under the show of a spurious liberalism, rationalistic, ‘broad,’ and pernicious teaching is bearing corresponding fruit.

The Scriptures themselves are not escaping the most searching, hostile criticism as to their genuineness and authority, in whole or in part. In the sphere of Biblical criticism the rationalist spirit appears without disguise. It is entirely sceptical, alike hostile to revelation and to God. It postulates throughout its inquiries the unsoundness of the chief conclusions hitherto accepted. It is above all things destructive, threatening to leave nothing about which to inquire; so that its object would seem to be, not to increase our stock of knowledge, but to diminish what little we possess.

The method of this sceptical criticism, too, is the opposite of the truly scientific. The criticism is mainly subjective and conjectural. Its critics make no patient induction of facts in order to arrive at just conclusions. Affecting to treat the Bible ‘like any other book,’ these writers enter on their investigations by assuming

it to be neither authentic nor genuine. For what less than this is the assumption that the Pentateuch is not the work of Moses either as writer or editor; that the Book of Isaiah is the production of at least two writers, the last of whom lived after all his 'predictions' were fulfilled; that the Book of Daniel was written by a 'pseudo-Daniel,' who wrote after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, or, as history records, more than two centuries after the canon of the Old Testament was closed? Assuming, further, that God always and everywhere has been working as He does here and now, it is conceived by these critics that miracle, supernatural interference, and prediction are impossible, since they are supposed to be no part of God's present working. And worse still, in both a moral and a scientific sense, the criticism of which we speak uses these unproved assumptions as its canons and tests! For example, the 'later Isaiah' and the 'pseudo-Daniel' are pure creations of the critic's imagination. Not a tittle of objective evidence of their existence has ever been adduced. But their existence is necessary to rescue the critic from the exigencies of his own reasoning. For the writings of Isaiah and Daniel *contain predictions*, if the Isaiah of Hezekiah's reign and the Daniel of the Exile wrote them. 'That, however, *cannot* be,' says the critic; 'prediction is *per se* impossible. The so-called "predictions" were therefore written *after the event*.' And accordingly the critic invents the 'later' and 'pseudo' prophets!

Equally unscientific and disbelieving then is this modern spirit, seen as it is working against the word, the rule, and the existence of God. But this is the spirit that inspires a large portion of our literature. It is modifying our theological science. It menaces every

ecclesiastical organization; it is affecting the character of the Christian ministry; and it is filtering into many evangelical Churches. The tide of sceptical inquiry—not so long ago almost confined to the learned—is rapidly covering the entire population, and already surges around our doors.

How urgent the need then for the Church of Christ to unite her scattered forces in association and congress on her common platform to meet this deplorable intellectual condition of the nation! Against the prevailing mental insubordination to God, the intellectual revolt from His rule, she must bring a true science of mind and of morals; and by the application of this to the nation, chase from amongst us the spurious systems of which we speak. Not until this is done can it be hoped that the national intellect will become subjected to God, and the life-giving streams of Christianity overflow in the thought and literature of our land.

II. The practical condition of a people, as of an individual, cannot be higher than its intellectual. We shall therefore find the condition of the nation in its religious, moral, and physical aspects in full consistency with what has been already described.

I. First, then, as to the degree in which the nation has become a Christian, in the sense of a worshipping community. No religious census has been officially taken in England; but it has been ascertained on reliable data<sup>1</sup> that about half the population is found with more or less regularity within our places of public worship. Of this select body of the people, however, though here is included all that is Christian in the

<sup>1</sup> Horace Mann's Report, 1851, and the statistical returns of the Churches for the year 1868-9.

nation, we cannot give a uniformly good account. The best of our evangelical Churches will be far from asserting that their congregations, or even, as a whole, their communicants and members, are really Christians; while the Churches themselves are weakened and hindered by sectarian and denominational estrangement. Of the rest of the worshipping community we cannot give even so good an account.

To begin with, an immense proportion is Roman Catholic<sup>1</sup>; the superstitiousness of whose rites, and the exclusiveness of whose spirit, exclude them from our calculation. And among the remainder must be included all that are embraced within the sphere of the so-called Catholic revival, Tractarian and Ritualistic; and all within the influence of Broad Churchism, or the rationalistic spirit, whether in the Established or Nonconformist Churches. We tremble to reflect, then, on the extent to which even the worshipping Protestant community is either becoming assimilated in creed and ritual to the Romish Church, or relaxed in belief, and involved in its inevitable consequences.

But if so much has to be confessed in limitation of the satisfaction afforded by the select portion of the community, alas for the remainder! The mass of the British people seem given up to indifference and irreligion, mere secularism and unbelief. The estrangement of the operative classes from the Christian Church is generally acknowledged with shame and grief. True, Christian working men form a large proportion of the numbers of British Churches; but these men are only an insignificant part of the entire working class. Of their miserable proportion an elo-

<sup>1</sup> The Roman Catholic population of Ireland alone is 4,490,583.

quent and well-informed writer says <sup>1</sup>:—‘On beholding it [the class of Christian professors among the working classes as compared with the rest], we are struck with its small dimensions. What a contrast does it present to the other two! [the opponents of Christianity and the neutral]. A verdant spot in the midst of measureless deserts; a strip of azure in the darkened sky; a cliff-girt island, where the vintage ripens, while, as far as eye can reach, the ocean rages round it—such is the professedly Christian section of the working classes. A few have yielded submission to Christ, but the vast majority are yet firm in their rebellion. Some have opened their hearts to the Gospel message, but what are they compared with the multitude over whom the darkness of eternal misery yet lowers? A small portion of the wilderness has been reclaimed, but outstretching on all sides lies the untilled desert.’ Not only these, however; the middle and upper classes—including a large portion of the culture and manhood of the nation—are either indifferent or hostile to Christianity and the Church.

What, then, can be thought of the religious condition of our country? It is now, at least, seventeen centuries since the Christian religion found entrance into Britain; and to-day, alas! we have only so miserable an account to give of its results on the nation! Surely every thoughtful Christian, each true Church of the Saviour, must be ashamed and grieved at the appalling state of the national religion.

2. Next, let us inquire into the general moral condition of the nation. Here also we are met with a

<sup>1</sup> The Glory and the Shame of Britain, p. 64.

state of things truly appalling. The national morals, indeed, must correspond to the state of national religion just described.

The British are pre-eminently a commercial people ; but the commercial morality of England is at this moment the shame of her people and the astonishment of the world. Let us then take a rapid survey of our commercial morals. In testing them, we on the one hand assume that God requires trade to be conducted conscientiously, with an honest intention of applying to every transaction the Saviour's golden rule ; and, on the other, that in trade there must be room for the remunerative profit of the merchant, and that a fair field be afforded for the exercise and reward of ingenuity, sagacity, and attention, as against indolence, folly, or inattention. Let us see, then, in what degree our commercial dealings will bear the application of these tests.

One class of business transactions may be described as contracts to be fulfilled at a future date. Though substantially buying and selling, yet the commodities to be exchanged are not immediately transferred. Of such nature are all engagements for construction, ship-building, the making of machinery, the manufacture of fabrics, &c. Now, in every such transaction there ought to be transparent honesty, such as God will approve, in every stage of the process. But are these contracts so conducted? Alas, no! Is it not a prominent qualification in a skilful man of business to be keenly alive to every possibility of overreaching, and even fraud? In the manufacturing districts, for example, are we not familiar with the practice of repudiation in many of these cases, should the markets so change as to make the contract disadvantageous?

And in the case of manufacture on commission, the employer must be exceedingly vigilant to ensure his receiving back his own raw material, and as much of it as he originally gave out. We need not multiply details. These frauds are so constant as to modify the so-called custom of trade, and to deteriorate our commercial morality in an appalling degree.

Take next the entire class of transactions known as buying and selling. In these, no deviation should be made from the proper market price; the quality of the article sold should be in exact accordance with the representations of the seller, and the consequent expectations of the buyer, which would exclude alike the concealment of defects and adulteration; and where commodities are sold by weight or measure, the utmost possible exactitude ought to be observed. But are these transactions so conducted? So far from it, that to mention their proper conditions is to expose their prevailing and flagrant violation. We are far from saying there are no honest traders in the country. Not the less true is it, however, that the general aspect of trading presented in newspaper reports, in statistics, and in formal investigation, abundantly corroborates our statement. For example, large sections of those retail dealers who supply the food of the people are charged with extortion; there is chronic soreness between them and the public, who are even combining in many places to protect themselves from such extortion. Scarcely a week passes without a batch of small dealers being fined for unjust balances, weights, and measures. Mr. Locke obtained a parliamentary return of these cases for the three months only, ending Midsummer, 1868; that return, containing neither

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summary nor compendium to occupy its space—merely a list of the cases—occupies two hundred printed folio pages! Of the injustice perpetrated in the quality of commodities we can scarcely trust ourselves to write; everything capable of deterioration having become the vehicle of this kind of fraud. It has been said that London bricks return to their original state of clay within sixty years; while Etruscan work is as good to-day as it was nearly three thousand years ago. Houses are being built that may last thirty years. Trade-marks have been extensively forged. Adulteration is at length limited only by possibilities, and this not merely in matters of minor importance, but even to every article of food, yea, the very drugs and medicine of the people. Alas, alas! it must be confessed that, in ordinary buying and selling, English commercial morality is appallingly corrupt.

Monopoly may occur without design and in the legitimate operation of capital. It ought never to be otherwise possible. And even in these cases there should be an obvious, honest limit to the advantages derived from the necessities of others. But these rules are habitually set at nought.

There are cases in which the merchant possesses superior information to that of the buyer. It is an interesting question how far the seller may profit by this. Let a heathen moralist speak on the point. An Alexandrian corn-merchant—Cicero supposes—comes to Rhodes in a time of scarcity; but he passed other corn-ships on the voyage; he sells at famine prices. Ought he to have divulged the secret that in a few hours there would be plentiful supplies? Cicero the heathen answers, Yes. So say we, within limits.



The merchant deserved a premium for the extra speed that brought him first into the market. But what would public opinion on the Exchange say, were a merchant to follow Cicero's decision? He would be called Quixotic, and his character for skill in business would suffer.

The public works and large financial schemes of this country are usually executed and managed in combinations of the public; as, for example, our railways, our docks, our banks, and our financial houses. In every operation, not to say every transaction, connected with these companies, there ought to be scrupulous exactitude and honesty; whilst integrity should characterize no less the general management of the entire concerns. But what a world of iniquity does the bare mention of this department of business suggest! Even the laws enacted by our legislature for the protection of the public are unblushingly evaded. Collusion and misrepresentation have marked these operations even in high places. Original shareholders are so certain to become piteous sufferers as to be the subject of a proverb. Representations and inducements intended to draw capitalists into these ventures are so notoriously dishonest, as to justify the assertion of a Mincing Lane circular, that 'free trade and unfettered commerce might seem to mean free swindling and unfettered fraud.' Only recently, one of the judges of the land declared of a prospectus issued under the auspices of some of England's principal men of business—a prospectus on which millions of property depended, and which actually tempted most cautious depositors—of this prospectus the judge declared that it was not honourable to the parties by whom it was

issued! Why say more? Alas for England that her commercial morality should be in such a condition! We are appalled as we reflect on our review.

Nor are the social morals of the nation in a more satisfactory condition. Tried according to the only standard by which God judges them, how are the relative obligations, natural and artificial, being discharged in England? We take occasion here to admit, with devout gratitude to God, that English society has many excellences almost without parallel elsewhere, and that there are tens of thousands of families and individuals of exceptional fidelity and virtue. But with all these admissions, and remembering the innumerable gradations of evil, the social life of the nation as a whole is deplorable.

The obligations arising from natural relationship are being extensively and flagrantly violated. Think of those of husband and wife. After making every possible admission of known excellence, fidelity, and virtue, in how many homes are found, between those who ought to be as 'one flesh,' distrust and indifference, neglect of conjugal duties, even hate and unfaithfulness! The English were priding themselves on the supposed purity of their domestic life, at least among the middle classes, as compared with that of continental nations. But the revelations of our Divorce Court within the last few years have given us a terrible awakening from that delusion. Those revelations have been so appalling and loathsome, that public opinion has at length suppressed their record in the newspapers. We need not dwell on so painful and humiliating a topic. But in English conjugal life the national morality is exceedingly corrupt.

Between children and parents, again, there is a conspicuous relaxation of discipline that is operating most disastrously on society, especially in large towns. Not only is there almost general failure in realizing the Christian type of home, but the domestic life which most prevails is such as God condemns. How appalling the spectacle presented in the extensive neglect of education in all its departments, in the myriad homes of extravagance and insolvency, of drunkenness and vice! The bearing of children towards their parents is just the counterpart of the picture that we should expect to find.

Need we inquire how fellow-citizens and compatriots discharge their duty towards each other? Is not selfishness the general feeling? seeking 'one's own things' the general practice? It must be confessed that in the social obligations arising from natural relationship the national morality is exceedingly corrupt.

But are the obligations involved in our artificial relationships any better discharged? Public opinion considers the great majority of employers to be more or less oppressive and unjust to those whom they employ; indifferent to their personal welfare, haughty in demeanour, and exclusive in associations and feeling. The employed, on their side, are charged with injustice, eye-service, and selfishness. In how few cases does a workman discharge his duty with the careful fidelity that the constant presence of his employer would secure! We need not enter into greater detail; but, to mention a typical case, it is well known that if a man have his hammer uplifted as the clock strikes the first stroke of the hour for cessation, he will not give his master the benefit of that suspended stroke, but flings the hammer

away. Indeed, the general feeling of the working class is at length expressed in a remarkable ‘cry,’ and this regardless of the attainability of their wish without injustice to others or injury to English trade :—

‘Eight hours to sleep,  
Eight hours to play,  
Eight hours to work,  
And eight shillings a-day.’

We will barely mention the difficulty of obtaining general excellence of work, and the too great prevalence of actual dishonesty ; while between householders and their domestic servants there are both chronic dissatisfaction and painful controversy. Now, making every allowance for gradations in these evils and for exceptional cases of fidelity, we must confess that our national morality in these departments is exceedingly corrupt.

Those departments of public morals, again, in which the general rule ought to be observed, that the welfare, virtue, and happiness of each person in the nation ought to be equally regarded and sought, present an aspect not less deplorable. These we can but rapidly enumerate. Reflect, then, on the general demoralization necessarily resulting from the state of our commercial morality already described. How these violations of equity must vitiate English life in every department, and by so much—as a redundancy and accumulation of evil—violate the rule we are now considering ! Vast accumulations of wealth trench on the proper rewards of industry. Rapid accumulation causes too great an expansion of credit, which ought never to exceed three times the capital : and insatiate desire for a fortune is not only an evil sign of our

times, but produces disastrous moral effects on those who indulge it, on their families, and on their neighbours. Yet Christianity is by no means against trade and commerce, or the possession of property. It does not even forbid vast incomes, so long as their possessors live in practical remembrance that every penny has been entrusted to them by God, whose stewards they are, and if they use their property according to His revealed will. But not the less true are our previous statements. And thus, consequently, every man's welfare is not being equally regarded.

We have thus far surveyed the state of the national morals in those departments where there is at least a conventional respect paid to social obligations, where neither vice nor crime is openly avowed. What shall we say, then, to the open vice of the country, and to the resulting social demoralization? This last may be tested by a glance at the amusements of the people. Among the permanent pleasures of the upper and middle classes are the opera and the theatre. What, then, are the staple of the plots which attract the largest houses? The recent discussions in the papers concerning Boucicault's play 'Formosa' have enlightened us. The opera's attractions are nearly altogether founded on violations, or supposed violations, of the law of God concerning the sexes. And in the theatre such plays as 'Formosa'—a play that has called forth the rebuke of even theatrical critics—not only draws the largest houses, but fills even the best places with well-to-do people, male and female. Indecency of dress and of deportment, too, has reached a height in which, for the former, the Lord Chamberlain has interfered, and for the latter, a genuine *cancan* has been exhibited by a well-known *artiste*. For the

lower and lowest classes the vilest theatres, circuses, and music-halls provide. Here are exhibitions that pander to a morbid brutality which reminds one of Roman cruelty in their ancient Coliseum. And here, too, every vice of the nation has licence and provision.

Need we wonder, then, that vice is so unblushingly avowed in our land? Family life, with the intercourse of brothers and sisters, is being defiled by the freer and more open indulgence of sensuality. No statistics can measure or represent the deep, the wide-spread violation of the seventh Commandment. The revelations of our courts are equally loathsome and appalling. The social evil is the standing reproach, the unyielding difficulty of our town life. The proportion of illegitimate births is startling, although England has not fallen so low as some Continental nations; and infanticide, which dogs the steps of the former sin like a Nemesis, is notoriously on the increase. Of the 24,648 coroners' inquests held in 1867, 4113 were on infants under a year old, of whom 1153 were illegitimate; while of 255 verdicts of wilful murder, 149, or nearly three-fifths, were on infants not twelve months old!

The vices of betting and gambling, chiefly associated with racing, but extensively practised in other connections, have become so notoriously wide-spread and disastrous, that they draw their victims alike from the aristocracy and the vilest of the people.

Of that monster vice—the prolific parent of every form of sin, of nearly all the pauperism, and of three-fourths of the crime of the nation—of drunkenness, what shall we say? The liquor-bill of the entire country cannot be less than £100,000,000 per year: allowing for the adulterations and exorbitant profit of

the seller to the operative and poorest classes, can scarcely be less than £120,000,000 per annum! It is said that drunkenness has been banished from the respectable classes. It may appear so; but in its place has arisen an incessant tippling all the day long, and by a vast proportion of the community, that has grown flagrant enough to call forth a warning voice from the medical papers. But generally, at least in the manufacturing districts, the vice of intemperance is greatly increasing. In England and Wales only, during the year ending Michaelmas, 1865, no fewer than 105,310 persons were proceeded against summarily before magistrates for drunkenness, or for being drunk and disorderly. In the year ending on the same day, 1868, the number was as high as 111,465<sup>1</sup>. The most extensive inquiry leads to the conclusion that increased facilities for obtaining strong drink always and everywhere leads to an increase of drunkenness. And that such increase of facilities has been given, let the following facts declare. The disproportion of drink-houses to the population is not less discreditable to the licensing authorities than it is deplorable. For example, in one parish of a population of 6,700, there are 39 beer-shops and 41 public-houses; or one drinkery to every 84 souls, including men, women, and children. And a village of only 182 inhabitants has four beer-shops<sup>2</sup>! This monster vice, then, is a most wide-spread and inveterate reproach to our country.

<sup>1</sup> Annual Police Returns.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Committee appointed by Convocation of Canterbury on Intemperance. A most valuable document, for which the public is greatly indebted to the Ven. Archdeacon Sandford, the chairman.

Of the crime of Britain, let the following statistics speak<sup>1</sup>:—The police and constabulary of England and Wales only, in 1867, was in number 24,073; and cost the country no less a sum than £1,920,505 12s. 2d. The total cost of prisons for the same year was £657,130.

The criminal classes, at the same time, number 112,943, of whom 15,090 were under sixteen years of age. And there were held 24,648 coroners' inquests, at a cost of £76,605 17s. 8d. But crime is so much on the increase, that for the year ending at the same period, 1869, there was an augmentation under nearly every heading of the returns<sup>2</sup>. The cost for prisons was in *excess* £54,000; the number of the criminal class stood at 121,290; and there was a policeman to every 843 of the population. These figures, as the previous, are confined to England and Wales.

Such, then, is the appalling condition of the national morals. We are overwhelmed with grief as we reflect on our survey. What shall we say—what do the Churches say to these things?

3. But, finally, we inquire concerning the material condition of our country. We shall do so very briefly. And we shall find it correspondent to the state of our morals, as these are to our religious and intellectual condition.

In the British Isles there are 105,000 square miles of surface to be inhabited by a population of say 28,000,000. Making every requisite deduction from this surface, we have an average of habitable space of not less than one acre for three human beings. But

<sup>1</sup> Judicial Statistics, 1867.

<sup>2</sup> Judicial Statistics, the annual volume issued August 12th, 1869.



how are these millions of people actually distributed over the land? Take one case as an example. The Edinburgh medical officer of health made a return in 1865, showing that in the worst parts of that city as many as 646 persons were crowded together to sleep over one square acre of surface! But even in a much better locality there were 553; and on one side of one of the largest thoroughfares there were 524! If we take our large cities together, and include the localities in which are the very best dwellings, the average rate of crowding reaches nearly 100 persons per acre.

Place these facts of overcrowding in connexion with the immorality, vice, and crime of the country, and say if we need to wonder at the prevalence of preventible disease and the high death-rate shown in the Registrar-General's returns. In the Midsummer quarter of 1869, the mortality of London and thirteen other large towns stood at 24 per 1000 of the population. In Birmingham it was 18, in Bristol 21, in Liverpool 27, and in Glasgow 36. These variations are most suggestive of the fact, that in a great degree this mortality may be lessened: in other words, an excessive death-rate is the measure and chastisement of the people's sin. Thus the average annual rate of deaths from every cause during the five years 1860-4 was 22.25 per 1000 of the people. But the rate of death per 1000, even in ordinary seasons, where 500 or 600 of the people sleep on a square acre, is above 60. In the borough of Salford it reaches among this class about 70, while in one street the death-rate was as high as 113. But in the best localities of the same borough the mortality is as low as 14. In the borough of Leeds, in 1865, the Registrar-General gives the rate as low as

10·4. And it may be surely accepted that, under proper sanitary conditions, the rate should not ordinarily exceed 10 per 1000.

Here, truly, is a lamentable state of things, involving a degree of national guilt inconceivable. The misery of the lowest classes, their vices with their consequences, reactionary and cumulative, and the 'guilt gardens' for their wretched children made by their homes and haunts, are all accounted for. The dwellings of such are simply execrable. The over-crowding, with the consequent lack of space, ventilation, decency, and everything that can lift the poor from the abyss of degraded poverty, are truly appalling.

But the pauperism of the country is not less fearful, and it also is increasing<sup>1</sup>. The number of paupers in England and Wales receiving relief at the end of May, 1866, was (exclusive of vagrants and lunatics in asylums) 848,873. On the same day, 1867, it was 900,256. In 1868, it was 934,517. In 1869 it has risen to 947,488! Take the metropolis alone, with its population of 2,802,000, according to the census of 1861. On the last day of July, 1869, the number of paupers was 124,414; but in 1866 it was no more than 100,488. In Scotland, on May 14th, 1867, the registered poor numbered 100,756, being an increase of 3,590 on 1866; the casual poor was 48,519, an increase of 4426. The total number relieved in Ireland, according to the return of Sept. 29, 1867, was 317,346; being an increase on 1866 of 47,173. While the cost of this pauperism for the year ending at the same dates 1867 was in Scotland, £807,631; in Ireland, £824,449; but for England and Wales during the year ending

<sup>1</sup> Annual Returns of the Poor Law Board.

Lady Day, 1867, it was £6,959,841; or about 6s. 6½d. per head on the whole population. Such is the pauperism of the British Isles.

As in the case of the national death-rate, so our pauperism is mainly preventible—the measure and the chastisement of our sin. The population, indeed, has doubled within the present century; but the national wealth has quadrupled. Yet British pauperism is a growing, humiliating burden on the nation's industry. It must be—it *is* mainly preventible. All the evidence points to the conclusion that the drunkenness of the country is the one grand cause of its pauperism. We appeal in support of our statement to the admirable Report to which we have already referred<sup>1</sup>. The appendix contains answers given by clergymen, judges, magistrates, recorders, coroners, superintendents of lunatic asylums, governors and chaplains of prisons, heads of constabulary, and masters of workhouses. Under thirty-six heads is contained a complete manual of information on this vice and its consequences. In regard to pauperism, there is perfect unanimity of testimony as to its mainly resulting from this vice, and being so far preventible. One master of a workhouse says, '80 per cent. may be given as the proportion of paupers who are the victims of intemperance.' Another, not a teetotaller, says he has had for twenty years to do with the administration of the poor-law, but he has found nearly every inmate directly or indirectly brought there by excess of drinking. Another says, of 4000 casuals passed through the vagrant wards of his workhouse, 2000 were *bond fide* working men; but these

<sup>1</sup> Report of Committee appointed by Convocation of Canterbury on Intemperance.

invariably confessed having come there through intemperance. One who had been in office eleven years, never knew a teetotaller apply for relief. Another never knew a pauper who was a teetotaller. And another, having been master of a workhouse twenty-one years, says he never had a total abstainer as an inmate. These are but specimens of extracts filling many pages.

We can come to but one conclusion on this question. The poverty arising from unavoidable calamity and infirmities of age is but a little matter. *That* can be met without heavy rates. We can afford to deal with it in a most generous spirit. We fully agree with one of the officials whose testimony is given in the Report quoted, who says, 'It would be easy enough to provide almshouses for all!'

Such, then, is the spectacle presented, even in a most cursory view, in the material condition of the nation.

We have now completed our proposed survey of the condition of the British people in its intellectual and religious, its moral and material aspects. The result is not less than appalling; its consideration overwhelms us with grief. Here is the answer to our questions as to the measure of success attending the present separate efforts of the Churches. What shall we say to these things? To the extent here indicated, the nation is neither influenced by Christianity, nor prepared to receive it. To the same extent also have the Churches failed to accomplish their mission in our land.

But what will be the attitude of the Churches in presence of these facts? Surely none can be content to go on as they are, with forces divided, in denominational channels only, having their resources weakened and

wasted in corresponding degree. No! The Churches cannot fail to be roused by the spectacle of their own weakness, their conspicuous failure, and the necessities of the people. We seek thus to stimulate them to the most earnest consideration of the practical object of bettering the condition of the entire nation, in order to its general subjection to Christianity, with its life-giving power.

We venture to say, then, that we have proved the absolute necessity of an immediate attempt to concentrate the thought, the resources, and the efforts of the isolated evangelical Churches on the great objects, national and Christian, that they view in common. But such concentration can at present be effected only by uniting the wisdom and worth of the entire Church in a Christian Moral Science Association as here proposed.

This is an age of patient investigation, of full and free discussion, among persons interested in common pursuits, scientific and social. Why may not all evangelical Churches, agreed as they are in the essentials of Christianity, associate themselves for mutual recognition and counsel, prayer and effort? They are in common responsible for the national religion, and ought therefore to find means for conference in common on the great work assigned to them by their Lord. Drawing closely together thus, they might expect, with their immense united resources, more effectually to grapple with the giant evils that afflict us, and to bring down the more abundant blessing of God on the British empire and on the world<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See Prospectus, pp. v, vi.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PRACTICABILITY OF THE PROPOSED ASSOCIATION AND THE GREATNESS OF ITS WORK.

No thoughtful Christian can reflect on the national condition presented in our last chapter without feeling the most poignant regret. He cannot but be convinced, too, that England would be in a far better state, inconceivably more influenced by Christian truth and life, had the Church realized in herself and in her work the Saviour's ideal. Nor can any other conclusion be reached than that she ought at length to be roused to a vivid sense of her actual failure alike to manifest and utilise her oneness in the evangelization of the people; that she should 'repent and do again her first works;' and that she ought immediately to unite her scattered forces for the more thorough discharge of her great mission. Questions arise here, however, of much importance. Is such combination of resources and effort practicable under the Church's present denominational conditions? or, is there anything essential in her life or constitution that forbids the Association desiderated? We have here, first, to show that all that is proposed is as practicable as it is Christian and necessary.

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Our scheme must proceed on the assumption that present ecclesiastical organizations, with their independent denominational life, must be accepted. It is required neither that these Churches become formally amalgamated, nor that they unite themselves into a great federation. It is only required that the evangelical Churches with their members recognise each other as 'Catholic fellow-churchmen,' unite in counsel, and co-operate in prosecuting their great work.

We assume, again, that the sum of the evangelical Churches is the visible Body of Christ. Such a Body must be in existence and visible; but where can it be found if these do not form it? Nor, again, would these be Churches of Christ were the reality and unity of His one Church inconsistent with present ecclesiastical conditions. The basis of their oneness must therefore subsist in their common life of fellowship with their Lord, in their adhesion to catholic truth, in their common possession of His Divine Spirit, and in the common work He has given them to do. But this unity is capable of being manifested in consistency with the ecclesiastical independence involved in present arrangements; and it would be successful in proportion to its freedom.

If these statements are true, then there is no bar to the constitution of the Christian Moral Science Association; while the necessity for it, and the greatness of its work, are most urgent reasons for its immediate formation.

Now the way has so far been cleared in the previous Essays, the arrangement of which may, with advantage, be briefly reviewed.

I. The writer of the first exhibits a mind singularly free from ecclesiastical bias, and in so far has presented us with a paper of equal excellence and usefulness. His great object is to show that the Pentecostal Church adumbrated the millennial Church of Christ, and that in neither its essential constitution nor its life is there anything to forbid the manifestation of its unity—although now existing as particular Churches—in mutual recognition and the prosecution of common work; that, in fine, the nature and claims of the visible Church are such as to necessitate that manifestation of oneness.

The writer commences by postulating the facts, (1) that the world-community vaguely dreamt of by Zeno the heathen is the ideal of Christ in regard to His universal Church; (2) that the Christian experience of the Church on a large scale is the exact counterpart of, as it is represented in, the experience of the individual Christian; and (3) that the facts of the life of God in the soul present the true basis of Church union, though the creeds were not formed wholly without the Divine Spirit, and the Bible is without positive error. In view of his great object, then, he further assumes that in our search after principles we should return to the Church in her first state, whence we may readily anticipate the nature and constitution of the Church of the future. From these positions he concludes, (1) that the great combining power or principle in the Church is not the creeds, nor any intellectual bond, but a vivid realization of Christ's real, continued presence in the Church by His Holy Spirit, in personal trust and love; (2) that this realization will be the bond of the future Church as of the Church in apostolic times, though the



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millennial Church will be characterized by maturity of life and knowledge.

In filling up this outline, in order to the perfecting of his argument, the author commences by a consideration of the relation of matter and form in the apostolic Church. The matter was her life, or 'mode of consciousness, feeling, and action, derived from her Head.' That action of course was made in a particular mode: that life assumed necessarily an external form. What relation had these—life and form—to each other? The life was of Divine origin: were the external forms that it assumed, and in which it found expression, equally Divine? A careful examination of the New Testament records leads to the conclusion that, although the forms flowed naturally from the life in the apostolic Church, yet those forms were not Divinely prescribed for all time. There was no uniform constitution. The Apostles exercised no legal restraint over the Churches. Manifestly Christ caused His disciples to be associated as a family vitally united to Himself, in order to the evangelizing of the nations. But He prescribed no immutable forms for the embodiment of its life and work. Accepting the use and mode of the Synagogue, He added the two Christian ordinances. But even these were not permitted to hamper the Church. The 'two or three' with Christ were the normal form of Church existence. Still, this first form presented the Church in her bridal attire; but that Church was pre-eminently utilitarian; she had nothing about her that was unreal or useless. Accordingly, the relation of matter and form in Christ's visible Church is such as leaves her free in every age and place to give suitable, adequate expression to her real life.

In contemplating the Church in her life and essence, the writer elaborately shows that her life has been in all ages a life of faith—in Old Testament times, though restricted in Judaism, as in the Christian dispensation. In Judaism was deposited the seed of Christianity. This community of life is developed, as it is embodied, in the Holy Catholic Church—a life in, by, and with Christ her Head. But even in the present state of that Church she is inchoate: ‘It doth not yet appear’—it has never yet been manifested—‘what we shall be<sup>1</sup>.’ The perfect Christian, or fully redeemed man, after the pattern of Christ, has yet to be seen. Not less is it true, however, that Church life is the highest form of social existence; that the communion of saints is necessary to the retention and impartation of that life; and that the Holy Spirit in the Church, acting through the Word, operates on mankind in effecting human redemption.

The conditions of Church life are found to be such as secure at once the possession of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, her ‘edifying of herself in love,’ and her propagation of Christ’s kingdom throughout the world as His great visible and outward organ.

The Church as a world-community was a clear conception of apostolic times, though it arose amidst the contemporary particularisms of Jews and different nations. ‘In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith that worketh by love.’ This universal and spiritual religion was the leaven intended to work upwards, until those aspirations are realized which were presented in the pattern

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 2.

assumed by the New Testament Church. And accordingly we look for a higher unity to be manifested in the future.

But, even in the first age, the particular Churches assumed no one general uniformity. Conformed, indeed, to the fundamental principles of Christian ecclesiastical life, a large margin was left to Christian wisdom and liberty. There was, however, essential unity under all their particularisms and diversity; while the aim of the entire Church, as of each society, was ecclesiastical conservation and aggression upon the world.

A review of the offices of the New Testament Church leads to kindred conclusions. The application of the essential principles of Church order were to be specially made by each Church, in every age. But the real was always preferred to the formal office; and there was ever in the Church a recognised body of rulers and teachers, apart from the general use of gifts by the entire society.

In prospect of the Millennial Church, or the possibility of 'the Church's return to her first love,' the writer points out that her principles are neither contingent, nor local, nor accidental; but immediate, universal, and necessary. They are charity, the central principle of Church life; holiness, or holy love; universality, or universal love; and permanence, in spiritual freedom. Thus he concludes that the only course for the present Church in her isolated communions to pursue is, to practically embody her light and love through unity, universality, and freedom. She need not strive for uniformity. A federal union is possible, and ought to be kept in view. But such

union is possible only through the Church's growth in holiness and love.

Here, then, in the first essay we have the nature and claims of the visible Church so presented as to exhibit the practicability, and urge the formation, of that Association whose claims we are advocating.

II. The writer of the second essay presents an argument well deserving attention, and leading to kindred conclusions with those we have just reviewed. After considering the essential principles of Church union, and the relation of the Mosaic to the Christian economy in regard to the elements of ecclesiastical constitution, he so exhibits the principles of the government and rites of the New Testament Church as to form an urgent plea for Church union. The doctrinal basis for that union is found in the evangelical truths held in common by all the Churches; truths equally well known and undenominational. The unity of the visible Church can be efficiently manifested in the combined action of its evangelical sections; while such combined action is possible in the cultivation of Christian ethics and in the endeavour to secure its practical application to the world, that is, in the sphere presented by the Christian Moral Science Association. Finally, in contemplating the Church of the future, the essayist says, that certain things will remain the same; (1) human nature and its depravity; (2) the known laws of the Church's development previously considered; and (3) God's known purposes in regard to its advancement and His past mode of effecting that growth. He infers accordingly that the foes of Christ may now be mustering for their final confusion;

and that the Church's present longing for a manifestation of her unity may be in preparation for the final battle. He accordingly concludes that it is probable the ecclesiastical longing for oneness and the necessity so imminent for meeting the foe, may operate to the modification of existing organizations; and that only those Churches will be permanent that possess the true Christian spirit of love and brotherhood, with zeal for the extension of Christ's kingdom.

Here, then, we have exhibited, in the existence of true Catholic unity and the possibility of its more perfect manifestation, satisfactory proof of the practicability of the Association proposed.

III. The third essay, on Christian Moral Science, is the production of a writer possessed of vast stores of knowledge, but equalled by his skill in using it. This essay alone is sufficient to secure attention to the entire volume in which it finds a place. One of the most valuable contributions to Christian ethics made in this country, its perusal has been not only a rich intellectual treat, but truly a means of grace. Here we have presented to us an armoury whence weapons may be drawn that no sophistical philosophy or heretical teaching can resist. If the principles exhibited are skilfully applied, the infidelity and spurious theology of our time will at length be overcome.

In his introduction, this accomplished and skilful writer proposes so to discuss his subject as to place ethics outside current rationalism and scepticism.

Proceeding to define Christian ethics, he reminds us that there can only be one morality—that a science of comparative morality is impossible. The problems of

the science admit of treatment (1) independently, *per se*, and out of all relation to the existence of sin; and (2) in relation to sin and the regeneration of man's moral life through redemption. Treated in the former method we have moral science; in the latter, Christian moral science. Accordingly, Christian ethics must cognize:—(1) The moral *per se*, without reference to sin; in its ideal form, that primordial morality which God, as the holy, wills and desires. (2) The lapse from the purely moral—sin; the culpable reversal of the ideal; that which man, as unholy, wills and desires. (3) The moral in its renovation through redemption; that which God as gracious, and man as contrite, wills and desires. These three forms are consecutive, and image a moral history of mankind. The first age is pre-historic; the second, pre-Christian; and the third, the history emanating from Christ enacted by those who appertain to Him.

The essayist proceeds next to determine the province and contents of Christian ethics. In order to do this, he is required first to define the meaning of the term 'law' in regard to the law of conduct. 'Law' in this respect must be distinguished from its typical use, which means only uniformities, as of nature, of art, &c. But 'laws' are a species of commands, and included in commands. Now every command comprehends (1) the projection of a wish on the part of a superior to an inferior; (2) its signification by words or signs; (3) its arming by sanctions (i. e. by an evil to be inflicted in case of transgression, &c.); (4) the power to obey or disobey. Thus, 1 and 2 make up the popular idea of a command; 3, the being obliged; 4, being free. There are accordingly four concepts here; viz. com-

mand, obligation, sanction, and freedom of the will. All commands, however, are not 'laws;' as e.g. particular commands in regard to specific acts. All laws are commands; but not all are right, as e.g. in jurisprudence. But in morals law must be right. All moral laws are therefore laws conformed to right; and moral law may be defined as right formulated by an adequate authority. Right, then, is the ultimate, primordial norm-standard. This is the standard of right and wrong in thought, motives, actions, and relations. Hence arise the chief problems in ethical science. The ethicist has accordingly to treat of (1) the theory of rectitude or right—a scheme of practical duties, or external obligation; (2) the theory of virtue—a scheme of virtuous motive, or internal obligation; and (3) the theory of happiness—a scheme of sanctions, or of external and internal rewards and punishments. This only moots the chief problems of ethical science. Ethics does not absolutely exclude theology, history, or psychology; though it is not to be confounded with them. Neander's dictum is accepted: 'Christian moral science on the side of dogmatics is applied dogmatics.' Thus dogma is fundamental to duty, faith to morals, and Christian faith to Christian morals. Therefore everything necessary to a sound dogmatic basis for morality is part of moral science. Thus ethics has to do, on the one hand, with anthropology, psychology, and history; and, on the other, with theology, redemption, and eschatology. Here then, in the most satisfactory manner, the essayist determines the province and contents of Christian ethics.

This leads further to a definition of the implicates of moral law. The importance of considering these can-

not be exaggerated in dealing with unbelief. For by working well this part of the argument, every atheist who admits morality must be compelled therefore to give up atheism. The implicates of moral law are—(1) A personal lawgiver; (2) moral law as right postulates that lawgiver as knowing and having authority over interior and exterior life—i.e. moral sovereignty, jurisdiction over thought, emotions, volitions, and consciences; and (3) his power to adjudicate—to nicely graduate punishment, &c., and as precisely to apply it. But these three implicates are equivalent to the Christian idea of God. Again, moral law implies, on the other side, (1) a person as its terminus, moral and responsible; (2) sufficient notification of the law to that person; (3) revelation as its necessary, its only proper publication; (4) no suspension of sanctions except as extraordinary; yet (5) the infliction of sanctions certain. But these five implicates are the equivalent of man and his known circumstances and condition. Accordingly, moral law cannot be cognized at all without implying the chief concepts of religious belief.

All true morality, it is further shown, is necessarily theistic; since the moral lawgiver must be infinite in knowledge, wisdom, and power. He must be higher than the highest creature. *This* is the most conclusive argument in proof of the existence and attributes of God. Creation *may* imply a Creator, moral law *must*.

In the two succeeding chapters this writer applies the tests already indicated, with most damaging effect, to the chief systems of atheism and of pantheism. For the atheist or the pantheist there can be no ethics at all—at best there can only be an art. And thus



Bacon's words are found to be true: 'A little philosophy inclineth man's heart to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion.'

Next is shown the need of a revelation as a criterion of morality. For that which lacks proper notification cannot be a command, still less a law. But notification in this case proves the existence of the supernatural; also a revelation, or intercourse with the revealer. Revelation is thus supernaturally made; while that revelation which is implicated in moral law is equally necessary to meet the spiritual and moral needs of man.

The essayist further treats of the suspension of moral sanctions, and gives its true explication. Sanctions are the chief constituent element of law. The notion of law is adverse to their suspension. If they are suspended, it cannot be for want of resources in regard to punishment, as in the escape of a criminal never detected. Moral science has a historical basis. Now history teaches that the sanctions of moral law are neither promptly nor fully met in the present life; nor are they totally in abeyance, or man in a *primâ facie* view might suppose there could be no moral governor. This stupendous and extraordinary fact, then, must have a sufficient reason—one commensurate in dignity and importance with what has happened. Now in the light of eternal redemption all is explained. This life is no ordinary, but a mediate, moral arena, in which men are not only being governed, but saved. Hence, under the partial suspension of sanctions men have the inevitable alternative of being saved here or punished hereafter.

The essayist is at length prepared to answer the

question, What is Christian moral science? And accordingly concludes by an elaborate definition of morality *per se*—morality in reference to the perversion of sin, and morality in regard to redemption.

In this most valuable essay, then, we have exhibited the magnitude and supreme importance of that moral science which it is the exalted privilege of the Christian Church to cultivate and to apply to the individual and the nation.

Let us now occupy the ground cleared for us in the essays thus reviewed. Here, then, is the visible Church of Christ, with a nature that admits of her oneness existing in the midst of external diversity. That Church, although at present found in isolated communions, does nevertheless possess a real unity, which can be externally manifested in greater degree, in the mutual recognition by the members of all true particular Churches of one another as catholic fellow Churchmen. That Church, further, has it in charge, the great commission given her by her Lord, to evangelize the nations: and the great means by which she is to achieve her work is, that moral science which is the result of the methodical and exhaustive study of the moral condition and responsibilities of all men in the light of Christian revelation.

The cultivation of this science, and its application to the moral amelioration of mankind, is thus seen to be a work of supreme necessity, as it is of inconceivable magnitude. And this is the *magnum opus*—the great work among men of the one visible Church of Christ. When it shall be at all adequately achieved, the Christianizing influence of the two forces—the Church and

her ethical science—will be seen in the national elevation of the British people: the intellectual and religious, the moral and physical condition even of the masses will show that at length the whole nation is becoming subject to Christ.

This glorious result, however, can be hoped for only as the Church shall fully realize and manifest her unity: while, under present conditions, this can only be accomplished by means of an Association consisting of the members of the several parts of the Church as catholic fellow-Churchmen. And that Association must occupy itself exclusively with the discussion of catholic Church questions, as distinguished from denominational and inter-denominational questions. For the consideration of these subjects there will be needed, too, the wisdom of the entire Church—the weight and worth of all her societies. But at present no provision is made for bringing into a focus the light and counsels of all sections of the Church.

In the Christian Moral Science Association such provision is offered. Its practicability is manifested in the arguments reviewed in this chapter. The greatness of its work—with the urgency alike of the national condition and the Church's present failures—stimulates all Christians to its immediate formation. Then will the aspirations of many ardent Christian souls be realized, and 'Church congresses will be made up of men of various evangelical denominations bent on finding common means of action for the salvation of the world<sup>1</sup>.'

<sup>1</sup> English Independent of Aug. 12, 1869.

## CHAPTER IV.

### , THE SUBJECTS CLAIMING ATTENTION, AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION INTO SECTIONS, FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE CHRISTIAN MORAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION.

WE have considered the place of the proposed Association, the great need for its immediate formation, its practicability, and the magnitude of the work it will have to achieve. We are, therefore, now prepared to enter upon an examination of the subjects, popularly conceived, into which that work divides itself, in order to their classification into sections for future Congresses.

These subjects are of vast range. They include all the principles of practical religion; all Christian moral science, in the abstract and in the concrete; everything pertaining to man, his obligations, and his welfare. Whatever of dogmatics, theological or ethical, pertains to this; the best means for applying the science to the individual, the Church, and the nation; the failure of present methods—its nature, extent, causes, and means of correction,—these must all be included. And cognizance must be taken of the transactions and work of every person, Church, or society having these, in whole or in part, for sphere of

operations. Man as he is, and as he ought to be, is the great subject of the united attention of the proposed Association. On the side of his intellect—the truth to which he ought to be subject, with his fidelity or failure in discharge of his intellectual duties: on the side of his spirituality or religion—in his social life, and in his material life, the whole sphere of his obligations, with his conspicuous failures, their extent, causes, and means of correction: man as he *is*, in all these aspects, must be considered in truly scientific methods, by a careful and exhaustive induction of facts. Man as he *ought to be*—the removal of every hindrance to this, and the means of securing it, how vast alike the range and the importance of both united thought and work! In a word, nothing Christian, nothing human, will be alien; nor will the doings of any society having for its object the amelioration of man's condition be foreign to the business of the new Association.

It has been shown, that in order to a scientific, i.e. an accurate and exhaustive study of morals, it is indispensable that the nature and obligations of men should be observed, and the results presented, in the light of the Christian revelation. Such will be the method in which every topic in the vast range of subjects will be considered in future Congresses.

This will necessitate a true analysis of those subjects, in order to a proper practical arrangement for Congressional work. They must be thoroughly classified, and distributed into sections and sub-sections, that each class or department may equally appear. Should this be efficiently done, the attention to be hereafter given to the various topics will be proportionate, and the

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wide field may be thoroughly mastered. Such analysis and classification we are about to attempt.

The distribution of subjects will best be made if the sections correspond to man's complex nature, with the ethical obligations that nature involves.

Man—every man—ought to be entirely subject to his God. He is so, in the sense of being in God's power and within the sphere of His government. But he ought to be so, not only objectively considered, but subjectively also—the willing, loving subject of his Divine Sovereign.

Man ought to be wholly subject to God, that is, in his entire nature and life. He is an intellectual, a spiritual or religious, a social, and a physical or material being. In each of these departments of nature and life he ought to be in complete willing subjection to his Maker. Not less than this can be considered the sum of his obligations, nor the discharge of less than this the adequate performance of his duty.

Man as intellectual, then, is under obligation as to his intellect. This department we shall designate Intellectual Morals.

Man as religious or spiritual, also has correspondent obligations. To this department we give the name of Spiritual Morals.

He has social obligations also, in so far as he is a social being; a department to be named Social Morals.

While, as a physical or material being, he has also corresponding obligations. This will be the department of Material Morals.

These four departments will form the principal sections into which the subjects will be distributed.

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It is indispensable, however, that a preliminary section be arranged on the Source of Christian Morals: that is, for the exhibition and affirmation of the revealed will of God. This is embodied in Holy Scripture, which is the only source whence a true system of ethical obligations can be drawn. It is necessary therefore, first of all, to affirm and establish the genuineness and authority, absolute and exclusive, of the written Word of God. To this will be devoted a preliminary section in the arrangements for Congressional work.

By such a classification all the current questions of catholic interests will be sure to come under proportionate observation and discussion<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Another classification has been proposed—written by the author of our third Essay (see p. 443). It is an analysis of great merit. But it does not appear well adapted to the practical work of the Congresses; not to say that that scheme in its entirety may be considered in the section of Intellectual Morals.

SECTION I.<sup>1</sup>

## THE SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN MORALS.

The materials for constructing an accurate system of ethical obligation must be in existence; but they are neither identical with the facts of man's present condition, nor to be found in any interpretation of mere nature. What we seek must constitute an external authority to which man is subject—a revelation of the moral Governor of the world making announcement of His commands with their sanctions; while the light of that revelation must afford sufficient explanation of human phenomena. Without these factors no true science of ethics is possible; as witness the confused and contradictory systems with which we are familiar. But the materials described will supply the data necessary to the construction of an accurate moral science.

The external authority desiderated, it is contended, we actually possess in Holy Scripture. This book is the record of God's revealed will. And as such it is the source whence we derive our knowledge of Christian morals.

The revelation contained in the Scriptures is a discovery of God made by Himself to man, over and above what is accessible to us by the light of nature and the power of human reason. Such a revelation is of course possible: for not only is God *able* thus to reveal Himself, but there is also special fitness in the thought of such intercourse between Himself and the rational beings He has created.

Such a revelation, however, is more than possible—it is probable. The exigencies of human condition are evidence of the probability. Man is a moral agent. His present state is neither fixed nor final. He is in a degenerate condition, and the world surrounding him is 'out of course.' Yet he is in a state of probation, under moral government, awaiting

<sup>1</sup> The writer cannot claim the honour of making the sectional analysis and classification now given. He is responsible only for its exposition.



the issues of his present life in a judgment and world to come. It must therefore be presumed that the moral law to which man is subject—the rule determining the quality of his moral actions—will be sufficiently revealed.

It is practically demonstrated that man cannot attain adequate knowledge of the Divine will in the exercise of his mere reason, and this alike because of its weakness and corruption. If, indeed, a perfect reason *could* attain sufficient knowledge of God and His rule, no such reason can be found among men. Reason is degenerated through the Fall and man's sinful course; while at the best there is a great difference between the reason of one man and another, the great majority of our race being, further, equally unaccustomed and disinclined to such inquiries. Were we left to our reason alone, there would thus be in the best of men a very inadequate knowledge of the will of God as our moral ruler; while the great mass of mankind would remain in almost total darkness. There would also be a danger of the standard being reduced to the measure of practice. In fine, the probable state of man, if left exclusively to the powers of his own reason, may be inferred from the condition in which he is found where the Divine revelation is either but partially possessed, or where it is practically set aside. The moral state of heathendom, ancient and modern, with the deplorable results of ignorance in the heart of European cities, is the fruit of the former condition; while the result of the latter is visible in present theological, ethical, and philosophical confusions with their baneful practical consequences. If such, then, are the results of man's living in the partial knowledge of God's revealed will, how deplorable must be our condition if wholly left without an external promulgation of the Divine rule of moral actions!

But further. If we except the teaching of the wisest and best of mankind, it possesses no true authority. Such teaching is merely human opinion—the precepts of men of like passions and infirmities with ourselves. Even the choicest efforts of reason, could we assume for a moment their perfectness, unless they were supernaturally accepted and promulgated by God, could have no authority over conscience; would be no rule of ethical obligation.

These several reasons are so many statements of man's need of the revelation in question; and his need is the ground

of the antecedent probability of its being given: while the need and probability are alike evidenced in the credit given in all ages to spurious revelations through oracles, divination, and auguries; in the general belief that the gods held intercourse with men; in the confessions of the wisest of mankind that a better revelation was needed; and in their strong hope that it would yet be given.

That revelation, so probable because so necessary, we hold to be contained in Holy Scripture; and this supplies us with the principles of true moral science. Of that revelation as supplying ethical principles, a summary is found in the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount; while the entire revelation may be described as being the Law and the Gospel. The Scriptures then, as the revealed will of God supplying the principles of an accurate system of ethics, will form the first section in the classification of subjects for Congressional discussion.

But this section must be further analysed, according as the evidences and authority of the Scriptures shall be classified. Now the Bible is proved to be Divine by evidence external, internal, and collateral; and being Divine, the Scriptures must have corresponding authority. These will, accordingly, be the sub-sections under the first head.

#### SUB-SECTION I.

##### *External Evidences.*

The Scriptures are proved to be of Divine origin by external evidences—on miracles, prophecy, testimony, and controversy.

I. *Miracles*.—The miracles recorded in Holy Scripture, and such as occurred in connection with its progressive formation, attest it to be of Divine authority.

The word 'miracle' is not the happiest term that can be chosen to describe the occurrences in question. The Latin word *miraculum* is equivalent to the Greek term *θαῦμα*, which means 'a wonder,' whether supernatural or not. And the use of its English form, 'miracle,' has tended to call attention, to the physical strangeness of the 'wonders' in question, rather than to their purpose of attestation. In the Greek version of

the New Testament the words used to describe the supernatural works of Christ and His Apostles are τέρατα, or 'prodigies,' δυνάμεις, or 'mighty works,' and σημεῖα, or 'signs.' Of these terms, σημεῖα, or 'signs,' is the best to describe the miraculous occurrences of which we write. Whatever physical strangeness may attach to them is only one circumstance of many which, taken together, make it reasonable in us to understand the phenomena as a mark, seal, or attestation of God's sanction to something else. Thus its *signal*ity is the great property to be observed in a miracle. And, attending mainly to this property, the *modus operandi* of miracles becomes of less importance. They may be produced by the ministration of angels; they may result from a provision made in the original scheme of nature securing their occurrence at the proper moment, according to Maimonides; or they may be caused by the interference of higher laws within subordinate, effecting a change in ordinary working; or they may be occasioned by a Divine suspension of the operation of natural forces.

Yet, as Butler says, miracles as signs must have relation to a so-called course of nature, from which they are different. And, with Archbishop Trench, we hold them to be above and beyond nature; for 'aught which is perfectly explicable from the course of nature and history is assuredly no miracle in the most proper sense of the word.' It would thus appear that a miracle ought to be characterized as follows:—(1) It is an effect or event different from the established course of things; (2) It must be an obvious sign of Divine interference; (3) It must be produced by the permission, assistance, or act of God; (4) It should be accompanied with a previous notice of its occurrence and meaning; and (5) It must be an attestation of some worthy doctrine, or of the authority of some person claiming to act for God. Now, such *are* the miracles that attest the Divine origin and authority of Holy Scripture.

It has been objected that miracles are contrary to human experience; but this is to beg the entire question. Assuming their reality, miracles cannot be contrary to experience, though they may be contrary to the analogy of human experience. This, however, so far from discrediting miracles, is a circumstance to be insisted on by the Christian advocate; whilst every objection urged on such ground is aimed equally against all human testimony, not excepting even the

evidence we possess of the reality of all scientific phenomena. Thus all contemptuous reference to 'travellers' tales,' or delusions, or myth, or legend, are beside the mark. For the same experience which convinces us of human credulity, also shows us the superstitious and injurious nature of the religions those delusions construct. But in the case of the scriptural miracles their testimony is conclusive. (1) They are great, numerous, complete, and public. (2) They sustained a doctrine of natural beneficial tendency. (3) And they are indissolubly connected with a scheme of revelation extending from the creation of man to the first century of the Christian era.

We therefore maintain that Holy Scripture is proved to be true by the external evidence of miracles.

II. But these Scriptures are further attested by *Prophecy*.

The term 'prophecy' has a wide and a restricted meaning. In its wider sense, it expresses the idea of the public utterance of the mind of God, the unveiling of the mysterious or unknown, the revelation of the Divine will. In its narrower sense, it signifies prediction, or the foretelling of future events. In the former sense, prophecy is the revelation; in the latter, it is the supernatural attestation of the revelation. In this last sense we now employ the term.

Prediction, then, is the fore-announcement of things to come in cases where no merely human prevision would avail to make the disclosures. It is of the nature of miracle as previously defined. Prediction is a miracle of knowledge: the unfolding of events, the fulfilment of which may be effected in the natural order of things; the wonder and the sign consisting in the supernatural foreknowledge and pre-announcement. Prediction, accordingly—as 'a declaration, description, or representation of something future beyond the power of human sagacity to foresee, discern, or conjecture'—is conclusive evidence of supernatural intercourse with God, and, as such, is an indubitable attestation of the truth of any revelation that contains such prevision.

But prediction is one of the external evidences of the Divine authority of Holy Scripture. Not only were its writers mainly such persons—designated prophets—as held supernatural communion with God, whose Word they publicly spoke; but their predictions are filled with minute fore-announcements of various kinds, while the entire substance

of their books forms one grand and growing prediction. In the Old Testament, whose canon closed about four centuries before Christ, there are found, e.g. predictions concerning the Jewish people; concerning the neighbouring nations and empires; and, above all, prophecies expanding in minuteness and copiousness of the coming Messiah.

These predictions received a minute and literal accomplishment, while many of them are still being fulfilled. The New Testament contains the predictions of Christ concerning Himself, the destruction of Jerusalem, the spread of His never-ending kingdom, and the course of events to the end of the world; with the predictions of His apostles concerning the corruptions of Christianity, the great apostasy, and the spread of infidelity; in fine, the course of events up to the second Advent. Hitherto these also have received literal fulfilment.

Prediction, then, supplies us with indubitable evidence of the Divine origin of Holy Scripture; evidence the more valuable, from its growing accomplishment supplying a constant, cumulative, present miracle.

III. A further evidence of the authority of Scripture is supplied in *testimony*. Of this we may say, that—(1) We do not exclude from it the evidence supplied by archæology, institutions, &c.; (2) We chiefly mean the testimony of persons, whether adherents, neutrals, or enemies; and (3) That evidence of the genuineness or authenticity, is testimony to the authority of the Bible.

Testimony in favour of the Old Testament is supplied by the Jews. The contemporaries of each writer accepted his production, caused it to be transcribed, and handed it down as both genuine and authentic to their posterity. The testimony of all these persons, jointly and severally, is most valuable. In the periods when these writings were produced, there were few books—a circumstance greatly favouring the most careful preservation of such as were extant. The known character of the Jews, with their veneration for the writings in question, renders it inconceivable that the canonical books are either forgeries or corruptions. While the fact of these sacred books being committed to the reverent care of a particular tribe—who were superstitiously exact in keeping the words and even the letters of their Scriptures—renders it impossible that the knowledge of

their origin could be either corrupted or lost. The testimony of the Jews to the genuineness, and therefore authority, as we shall presently see, of the Old Testament, is most valuable. Their unchangeable adherence to it,—not only contemporary with its origin, but continuing even to this day,—is well expressed by two opposite characters belonging to that nation. Josephus testifies<sup>1</sup>, ‘For, so long a period having now elapsed, no one has dared either to add or to take away from them, or to change anything; it being a thing implanted in all Jews from their first birth, that they should account them as oracles of God, and abide by them; and, if need were, gladly die for them.’ And Philo says<sup>2</sup>, ‘They change not even a word of the things written by him [Moses], but would rather endure ten thousand deaths than be persuaded to what is contrary to his laws and customs.’ ‘Socrates was a contemporary of Malachi; the source of the two philosophies which have influenced the world was of the same date as the last of the Hebrew prophets. Better might we suppose the Greeks ignorant as to the dates of their philosophers, than imagine the Jews, to whom the word of God was dearer than life, ignorant as to the date of their prophets<sup>3</sup>.’

Further testimony in favour of the Old Testament is supplied—(1) In the records of historians that describe the condition of the ancient empires and the world in complete consistency with the biblical narrative; and especially in the cases of those passages once supposed to be contradictory, but which further researches have reconciled in the most conclusive manner<sup>4</sup>. (2) In the Samaritan and Septuagint versions. (3) And above all, in the testimony of Christ and His apostles: our Lord receiving the Jewish Scriptures as of Divine authority; His apostles holding the advantage of the Jews to consist chiefly in their possession of ‘the oracles of God.’

In favour of the New Testament, and in measure, of Old and New together, we have the testimony—(1) Of contemporaries. The books were received as history while witnesses of the recorded transactions were living. The

<sup>1</sup> Contra Ap. i. 8; Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. iii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> In Euseb. Præp. Ev. viii. 6, p. 357.

<sup>3</sup> Pusey's Lectures on Daniel, first edition, pp. 294, 295.

<sup>4</sup> Herodotus and Daniel, for example.

condition of Palestine in the time of Herod; the birth, claims, works, life, death, and resurrection of Christ; that His disciples, so few at first, were scattered over the Roman world, and became astonishingly increased in numbers; in fine, the main facts of the Gospel history; these were by contemporaries held to be historically true. So that, while the majority rejected the Gospel as such, the facts on which it was founded were acknowledged by all. (2) The testimony of subsequent writers, of whom upwards of fifty may be quoted, who wrote within the first four centuries of our era. These authors belonged to all parts of the world; they represented not only the large body of the Christian Church, but multitudes who were not Christians,—heretics, neutrals, and foes. These quote or refer to the Scriptures, more or less, as a distinct volume, genuine and authentic, and as of peculiar authority, or Divine. While heathen and Jewish writers confirm generally and illustrate the New Testament narratives,—Josephus in his Annals, Tacitus in his History, Suetonius in his Biographical Sketches, Juvenal in his Satires, and Pliny in his Letters, all confirm the historical statements of the sacred books<sup>1</sup>.

But the best of all testimony to the Divine origin of Holy Scripture, is that of the persons who in every age, having accepted its guidance, have walked in its light, have tested its principles, and realized its promises. The witness of men saved by faith in the Divine Author of the Scriptures, drawn to Him by their revelation, is the best and most touching testimony. And this has been borne continuously from Adam to Moses, from Moses to Christ, and from Christ till now, by the entire body of the justified; a glorious company of human beings, who have borne—and borne away from earth to heaven—the likeness of their God.

This is testimony to the truth and power of Christianity, as well as to the authority of its sacred books.

IV. But *controversy* is another external evidence of the Divine origin of Holy Scripture.

By 'controversy' we mean those disputes or debates that arise in the agitation of contrary opinions. That there should be such strife in connection with the spread of Christianity, was not only to be expected *à priori*, but was pre-

<sup>1</sup> See the passages quoted in Paley, Pt. I. ch. ii.

dicted by its Founder. 'I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword.' And His Church accordingly has ever been involved in controversy. She has not only had to proclaim and teach the truth contained in her sacred books, but to defend alike it and them. She has done this against the foes of her Lord, heathen and heretic; she has done this within her own borders, as difference of opinion has arisen, correcting the ignorant, strengthening the weak, and restoring the erring. She has defined and defended the truth; she has maintained and proved the authority of the Scriptures. And to-day, when with a wilder shout of triumph her foes are combining against her, and when her feeble admirers are tremblingly awaiting the issue, there is nothing new for her to meet in controversy except the unauthoritative postulates of conjectural criticism, which are baseless as the fabric of a dream.

In the results of controversy we have strong external evidence of the Divine origin of the Scriptures. Here are the defences, the muniments of our faith: to the attacks of opponents, and to the disputations of controversy, we are indebted for their perfectness and strength; while to the same cause we owe that nearer approach to accuracy in exposition and system, which the Church has ever been making.

The four external evidences of the Divine origin of the Scriptures—miracles, prophecy, testimony, and controversy—form the first sub-section in the department of the Source of Christian Morals. To conserve and perfect, to spread and apply these to the exigencies of our time, will be noble work for future Congresses.

The business under this sub-section will comprise papers in every department of External Evidence, and papers on Infidelity.

## SUB-SECTION II.

### *Internal Evidences.*

It is right that the character of a book should be tested by its contents; and this test the Scriptures are able to bear. What, then, are the contents of the Bible,—its truths, its ethics, its gospel, and its history? Are they such as a



Divine revelation may be supposed to contain—worthy of God and adapted to man? And is the revelation in its progress self-consistent, evidencing properties that no other literature has been found to possess? All this is answered in the affirmative by the contents of the Bible; and this is its internal evidence and authority.

But such internal evidences may be further classified in the present sub-section. The first which we shall name is—

1. *Impartiality*.—This is a property which no other composition than the Bible exhibits in its perfectness, but which is exhibited throughout the whole of the Scripture documents,—although not less than fifteen centuries intervene between the earliest and the latest, and their writers are of ‘all sorts and conditions of men.’ The impartiality of the Scriptures is severely just; their descriptions and judgments are transparently equitable, alike to friend and foe; such as man cannot be conceived of as writing except in the character of the ‘prophet’ of God.

Accordingly, the truth revealed is simple in its utterance, clear and fearless in its rendering, austere attractive in its dignity. Whatever of mystery attaches to it is incidental to its transcending the limited faculties of man; whatever difficulties, they are analogous to those found in nature and providence; while there is no attempt to veil mystery or difficulty, or to answer curious questions, for the sake of winning adherents. Of man’s actual condition there is no partial or compromising utterance. However distasteful to us, our real state, with its causes and consequences, and the means of our recovery, are all unfolded without extenuation and without injustice. Of sin there is but one utterance—of the utmost abhorrence. It is the thing which God hateth, and which He cannot view with the least degree of allowance. And even in the Gospel, every hard saying, all the difficulty of entering the strait gate, of walking the narrow way, finds deliberate, clear, impartial statement. Christ will not have a disciple—though it be a question of eternal life or death—by concealment or subterfuge: no, each convert is required first to ‘count the cost,’ ere he ‘take up his cross’ and follow his Lord. The same inflexible impartiality is found in Scripture narrative, biography, and description. Of the Jews,—the chosen people—the history omits no characteristic or conduct, however humiliating or revolting. It is accurate.

and equitable as the record of heaven. Of the Gentiles, no extenuation, exceptional excellence, or hopeful characteristic, is omitted. Of good persons—the saints, patriarchs, and prophets, the ‘friends’ of God and writers of the sacred books in question—the whole truth is spoken, whether good or bad: the faults and sins even of an Abraham, a Jacob, a Moses, and a David, as well as of a Pharaoh and an Ahaz. Of bad persons—against whom God opposes Himself, since they will not submit to His rule—the good is stated as well as the bad: the excellences of an Esau, a Balaam, and a Saul. In a word, the impartiality displayed in Holy Scripture is the one exception of literature; it is perfect, affording an example of the equity to be applied on that Day when every man shall ‘receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad.’

But this impartiality is satisfactory internal evidence of the truth of Holy Scripture.

2. The *Utility* of the contents of Scripture is another internal evidence of its Divine origin.

The Bible contains the most useful instruction ever communicated to man. Here is revealed all that is important to be known concerning ourselves and God: the ‘ways of God’ in His dealings towards us, and ‘His ways’ in which He requires us to walk, are plainly exhibited. ‘A light’ is thus afforded ‘upon our path, and a lamp unto our feet,’ in our recovery to God. Instruction like this—so complete, accurate, unhesitating, and important, is supplied in no other literature on earth. Its utility may be further tested by imagining the consequences of the universal obedience of mankind to its precepts. Though in the present order of things, death, misery, and in some degree sin might remain, yet this ‘vale of tears’ would then be transformed into a Paradise. Sin would be under indescribable control; misery would be alleviated and mitigated beyond our conceptions; while death would everywhere lose its terrors. Mankind would suffer from no isolations or selfishness, no hate, oppression, or warfare. Universal virtue would mark the human family, sympathy and love would bind all nations into brotherhood. ‘They would not hurt nor destroy in God’s holy mountain.’ ‘Then the earth would yield her increase, and God, even our own God, would bless us.’ ‘And all the ends of the earth would fear Him.’

Such, then, is the utility of the contents of Holy Scripture: conclusive internal evidence of their Divine origin.

3. Further evidence derived from their contents is supplied in the *unchangeableness* of the truth thus revealed.

Immutability is a Divine attribute; the exclusive privilege of the all-perfect God. Man possesses it not: it is not found in any teaching or literature of his exclusive production. But *unchangeableness* is a characteristic of the truths of Holy Scripture. There has been change in the sense of progress in our apprehension of scriptural truth, in our teaching and systematizing of its doctrines; but the revelation itself has remained unchanged and immutable. 'In theology, as in every other department of human knowledge, there is a law of progress, according to which divers portions of Christian truth were not to attain to their rightful prominence in the systematic exposition of doctrines till after the lapse of several generations.' 'Truths which in one age are almost latent . . . . are brought out more distinctly by subsequent ages, and are ranged in their mutual connection, in their position as parts of the system of truth, and in their relation to the rest of our knowledge concerning the nature and destinies of man. Not, however, that this progress is always an advance along the line of truth in theology, any more than in other sciences. Man's path bends aside, winds, twists, seems often to return upon itself. His orbit has its aphelia as well as its perihelia.' 'Thus one theological system after another has passed away; each, however, leaving behind some contribution, greater or less, to the general stock of theological truth. Meanwhile God's word stands fast even as the heavens and the earth, and is the mine from which every new system is extracted, and is the canon whereby it is to be tried; and as more than fifty generations have drawn the nurture of their hearts and minds from it, so will generation after generation to the end of the world<sup>1</sup>.'

In the *unchangeableness* of the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures we have internal evidence of their having originated in Him who is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'

4. But the *universality* of its teaching—alike in its appli-

<sup>1</sup> Hare's *Mission of the Comforter*, 2nd ed., Note G, pp. 208, 210, 211.

cation and adaptation to mankind—is further internal evidence of the authority of the Bible.

It is indispensable to a revelation from God to mankind that its doctrine and precepts should be of universal application and adaptation. This, however, cannot be predicated of any literature or book, of any religious system or sacred writings, except Christianity and the Bible. But of the Christian Scriptures it can be predicated. Their revelation affects all mankind. The ethics of the Bible are of universal application, whether accepted or rejected. Its Gospel is proclaimed to all, and to 'every one that believeth' is 'the power of God unto salvation.' The universality of the glad tidings is involved in its unities: 'There is one God [and one human race] and one Mediator between God and man—Jesus Christ, Himself man: who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in its proper seasons<sup>1</sup>.' The one condition of salvation is faith; the only life indispensable is love; its one acceptable cultus is consecration. But these are of universal obligation; they can be discharged by every one, in any clime, age, or society; a child can understand and obey, a slave accept, practise, and be saved.

The Scriptures are thus clearly as universal as they are immutable, useful, and impartial in their teaching. They bear in these characteristics clear internal evidence of their Divine origin.

Under the sub-section of Internal Evidences the business of the Christian Moral Science Congresses will include papers in every department of these topics, and papers on Rationalism.

### SUB-SECTION III.

#### *Collateral Evidences.*

These are found in the persons and things external to the revelation sustained, but contemporaneous and parallel with it. They are independent of the sacred record, by which they cannot have been controlled. The Scriptures are promulgated in the midst of a race more or less covering the habitable earth; this people has a history previous, contemporaneous, and subsequent to the date of the Biblical

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.

records; while both mankind and the Bible are found within the sphere of an external world. Here then must be ample field for the refutation or confirmation of the statements of Scripture; and the more valuable from its independence. If the Scriptures indeed come from the Creator of this universe and the moral governor of our race, there will be consistency and correspondence between His word and His works. Mankind with the world they inhabit will supply collateral evidence of the authority of the Bible.

1. The first collateral evidence to be mentioned in this sub-section is *History*.

By 'history' we mean the course of human affairs as a whole from the first age until now; and we include, of course, all the parts of that whole in the affairs of particular peoples and times. The testimony of history will be conclusive in this department of evidence. What then is the voice of history? First, history, in whole and in part, is not inconsistent with the contents of Scripture. This is valuable negative evidence: for assuredly there would be constant, fundamental antagonism were the Bible untrue. Secondly, the whole course of history is in its facts, principles, and philosophy, consistent with Scripture. The facts of the former are illustrations and proofs of the moral principles and statements of the latter. Thirdly, the entire course of history is intelligible only as it is interpreted in the light of Scripture. The Bible reveals a coming Saviour, whose advent and departure occur as predicted, to whom all men and their history are drawn, as to a centre, and for whose second advent all subsequent events prepare. And history—constructed independently of the writers and custodiers of the Scriptures—is entirely cast upon this plan. 'The history of the race of Adam before the advent is the history of a long and varied, but incessant preparation for the advent.' 'Greece contributed a language and an intellectual discipline, Rome a political organization, to the apparatus which was put in readiness to assist the propagation of the Gospel; and each of these in its kind was the most perfect that the world had produced<sup>1</sup>.'

'The condition of the world in general at that period [the crucifixion] wears a "remarkable" appearance to a Christian's eye. He sees the Greek and Roman elements brought

<sup>1</sup> Gladstone's *Juventus Mundi*, p. 374.

into remarkable union with the older and more sacred element of Judaism. He sees in the Hebrew people a divinely-laid foundation for the superstructure of the Church, and in the dispersion of the Jews, a soil made ready in fitting places for the seed of the Gospel. He sees in the spread of the language and commerce of the Greeks, and in the high perfection of their poetry and philosophy, appropriate means for the rapid communication of Christian ideas, and for bringing them into close connection with the best thoughts of unassisted humanity. And he sees in the union of so many incoherent provinces under the law and government of Rome, a strong framework which might keep together for a sufficient period those masses of social life which the Gospel was intended to pervade. The city of God is built at the confluence of three civilizations. We recognise with gratitude the hand of God in the history of His world<sup>1</sup>. And lastly, history is at once the interpretation and the seal of the many predictions of Scripture<sup>2</sup>. In all these respects, accordingly, history is a most important collateral evidence to the supernatural origin of the Bible.

2. *Philology* supplies another class of collateral evidences in support of the same position.

As the science of language, philology, like history, must have important evidence to give. Human speech always and everywhere has been independent—uncontrolled and uncontrollable—of the Scriptures and their writers. The Bible true, its contents must at least be consistent with philology. They *are* consistent: the science in question having supplied nothing to shake our confidence in Scripture. There has, of course, been much verbal, etymological, and philological criticism ventured by rationalist critics against the authenticity of certain portions of the Biblical narrative and certain books. But these have all been dispersed on the application of a deeper, wider, and more accurate learning<sup>3</sup>. The conclusions of philological science as a whole, however, are more than consistent with Scripture; they corroborate its history and its teaching. Indeed, such conclusions are consistent with no other theory of man's origin and disper-

<sup>1</sup> Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*, ch. i.

<sup>2</sup> Sub-section i. 'Prophecy.'

<sup>3</sup> See, among many, the Bishop of Ely on the Pentateuch and the Elohist Psalms; and Dr. Pusey's Lectures on Daniel.

sion than that supplied in the Biblical narrative. There can scarcely be fewer than nine hundred varieties of language spoken on earth<sup>1</sup>. Surely, if proof of divergence from Scripture exists, it will be found here. But what is the fact? Why, that all the varieties of human speech have been classified into three families. These were at first called the Shemitic, the Hamitic, and the Japhetic, after the three sons of Noah; now they are denominated the Aryan, the Turanian, and the Semitic. Of these three it is believed by the first philologist of his time, that they are all reducible to one original language, the mother tongue of primeval man. 'The science of language thus leads us up to that highest summit from whence we see into the very dawn of man's life on earth; and where the words which we have heard so often in the days of our childhood, "And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech," assume a meaning more natural, more intelligible, more convincing than they ever had before<sup>2</sup>.' Philology thus confirms the Scriptural account of man's origin, unity, and distribution: and by so much corroborates the weightier contents of the Bible. This science is therefore an exceedingly valuable collateral evidence of the Divine origin of Holy Scripture.

3. The next collateral evidence to be mentioned is supplied in the science of *geology*.

The value of this testimony can scarcely be exaggerated. If we have true facts presented to us, they supply us with parts of a Divine record as indubitable as His written Word. If only geology could be made a perfect science; all its data accurate, the entire facts of its sphere of operation known and systematised, such evidence might be accepted as a test of the authority of Scripture. The former is the work of God; the latter assumes to be His Word. What, then, is the evidence of geology, so far as its sure conclusions are known? First, to the objection that there is serious discrepancy between the first chapter of Genesis and the results of geological science, we reply, the question is one of interpretation only,—and that not a new one. Long before geology, or even modern astronomy, presented the difficulties that have recently perplexed believers, and afforded

<sup>1</sup> Max Müller's Lectures on the Science of Language, Lect. I. p. 25, ed. 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Lect. IX. p. 377.

an imaginary triumph to the infidel, there were men who could freely discuss the question of a literal acceptance of the Mosaic statements without ceasing to be profound believers in the Divine inspiration of Holy Scripture, and of this particular part<sup>1</sup>. Then, even should the alleged discrepancy be established by completed research—which is not yet certain—it will resolve itself only into a question of interpretation. We shall not have to erase the chapter, but we shall understand it better. Secondly, but consider the general agreement of that chapter—indeed of all the Scripture narrative—with the conclusions of geology. The Bible and geology are at one in the following positions: That creation, not an eternal succession of beings, is the origin of every animal and vegetable species that exists; that creation dates backward for countless ages; that a lapse of an unlimited duration occurred between the creation of the constituent parts of this earth and their ultimate elaboration into order; that the first condition of things was chaotic, yet involving the earth's roundness and rotation; that a distinction existed between light and the luminary; that the stellar system existed before the formation of our globe; that chaos was made to yield to order in successive stages of development; and that the origin of the human species is of very recent date. The case then stands thus: the account of the origin of our world, supplied in Scripture, was given with substantial accuracy more than three thousand years before geology arose to confirm it, and that, too, under conditions that do not supersede the necessity of scientific inquiry; with the minimum scientific anticipation there is the fullest revelation of God as the Creator and Sustainer of all things. Heathen cosmogonies were either pantheistic or atheistic. They taught the eternity of matter developing into life, or described its deity as in weary loneliness evolving worlds, and thus embodying itself. How immeasurably superior the cosmogony of Moses corroborated by the conclusions of geology; he is the first to record that creation was by the absolute will of God! Such is the testimony of geology to the Divine origin of the Bible—a collateral evidence of the most satisfactory kind.

<sup>1</sup> See the writings of Calmet, Burnet, Stillingfleet, Henry, More, Bacon, Bede, Origen, Irenæus, Josephus.



4. Another class of collateral evidence is afforded in *anthropology*.

This is the science of the structure and nature of man ; with whom it stands in the same relation as theology does to God. The evidence of anthropology is as valuable—because as independent, and, in some respects, as Divine—as that of geology. Now the results of inquiry into the structure and nature of man are, first, not inconsistent with Scripture. Against the vagaries of some modern sceptical anthropologists, who have even been rebuked for their unscientific method and temper in the public press, we set the actual facts of ethnology. Professor Huxley, who is an authority on this question, and is equally distinguished for his high scientific standing, and for his rejection of the Book of Genesis, maintains that the human race has sprung from one pair. True, he adopts the Darwinian theory in explanation of man's distribution ; but he contends that there is no evidence against our race having sprung from one pair, to be found either in palæontology, archæology, manners and customs, history, or philology ; while physiology, not being against it, is therefore in its favour ; and the evidence from anatomy he considers perfectly overwhelming<sup>1</sup>. Now, add to this the evidence of philology already adduced,<sup>2</sup> and it will be found that in this department anthropology is fully consistent with, and therefore confirms, the Biblical account of man's origin, structure, homogeneity, and distribution. But anthropology, in its metaphysical, psychological, and moral departments, is equally consistent with Scripture. Everywhere, and always, have men's mental and moral characteristics been the same ; their sins, vices, and miseries ; their mortality and death ; their spiritual needs ; their susceptibility to similar impressions from the same considerations ; the uniform results of their reception of the Gospel ; the similarity of their virtues, their religious life, and their progress in improvement—these all are most fully correspondent to the teaching of Scripture concerning man, his relation to God, the cause of estrangement from his Maker, the nature, extent, source, and consequences of such alienation. The results of anthropology

<sup>1</sup> Huxley on the Method and Results of Ethnology in the Fortnightly Review, June 15th, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> Pages 523, 524.

are thus most important collateral evidence of the Divine origin of Holy Scripture.

We have examined four exceedingly important collateral evidences of the authority of the Bible. To conserve, perfect, and apply these to the exigencies of our times, will be noble work for the proposed Association. Under this head, the business of the Congresses will include papers on Sciences.

#### SUB-SECTION IV.

##### *The Consequent Authority of Scripture.*

The sum of the evidences considered—external, internal, collateral—can lead to no other conclusion than that the Scriptures are Divinely originated. If so, their authority over us is supreme. They reveal the will concerning man of that God who is at once our Creator, our moral Ruler, and our Redeemer.

In this position it is implied, as it is maintained, that the Biblical documents are genuine; that is (1) they are severally written by the men whose names are actually attached to them, whilst all the men who wrote them, whether their names are now known or not, were true, Divinely-recognised servants of God—patriarchs, prophets, apostles, or other; and (2) the text of the sacred documents remains substantially as left by their writers.

It is further implied, and maintained, that the Scriptural books are authentic. The men of God, in their genuine writings now in our possession, told the truth. What they have written is true. Their statements concerning themselves and God, with the Divine transactions and intercourse, their historical and experimental utterances, their theological and ethical teaching—in fine, the entire contents of their productions—are all authentic or true.

As genuine and authentic, these documents must be the result of Divine inspiration. The books claim to be thus originated: they claim it explicitly and implicitly. 'Holy men of old wrote' them 'as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' The Syriac equivalent of the word in 2 Tim. iii. 16, is accordingly 'written by the Spirit.' The writers were

instruments employed by God to make known Himself and His will to man, while their writings have consequent authority similar to their own. Thus the Apostles' authority and that of the Prophets were alike Divine—that of Christ, who sent the former; that of Jehovah, who sent the latter. 'Thus saith the Lord,' is their formal and substantial declaration. The sum of their writings is described as 'the Law,' the 'oracles of God;' whilst of the entire period of their production it is written, 'God, having spoken in the past, at many times, and in [many portions or] manifold ways, to the fathers in the prophets, at the end of these days spake unto us in His Son<sup>1</sup>.' The fact of inspiration is thus assured. Its method and conditions have been systematized in conflicting theories; but the conditions of inspiration are obvious. They are (1) the actual Divine inspiration of the men with the truths they wrote; (2) the human instruments are nevertheless but earthen vessels, though charged with heavenly treasure, which fact will account for such defects in their writings as are inseparable from man's spirit; (3) the actual various readings to which the documents have been liable in their very numerous copyings; and (4) the actual condition of the many versions or translations that have been published.

Thus the perfect, infallible truth has come down to us through an inferior medium of human spirit, language, and conditions. The result is exactly what we are now experiencing. We possess a full, true, authoritative Bible, with a slight verbal admixture here and there, which is only as grit from the millstone in the bread that we eat.

The Scriptures being inspired of God are also our sufficient rule of faith and practice. As such they are inclusive of the things necessary to salvation; the things of faith,—or what we are to believe, and in whom we are to trust; the things of practice,—or what we must do to be saved, how we are to live unto Him who has redeemed us, and how we are to spread the knowledge of His truth, and extend His kingdom on the earth.

The sacred Scriptures are thus our authoritative rule of life—the revealed will of God. The case being so, the authority of the Bible is such that

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 1, Greek Version.

1. *It ought to be accepted by all.* Every man should acknowledge and receive the Scriptures with devout gratitude to their Great Author, with childlike submission to His will therein revealed; and they should be treasured by mankind as of priceless value.

2. The Scriptures ought *to be obeyed by all.* Properly obeying them, men will practically accept them as their sole rule of life, believing their teaching and yielding to their guidance—following their instructions and practising their precepts. Thus the Bible will be obeyed in the full surrender of faith; men will be cast into the mould of Divine teaching, and receive back from it the image of its perfect revelation of Christ, as wax receives the impress of a seal. Men ought thus to be obedient, objectively and subjectively, to the Word of God.

3. The Scriptures demand *to be studied and taught.* We ought to understand them to the utmost of our capacity, and to teach their contents to the young and to the old—in Christian houses and schools, in halls, colleges, and universities, as well as in the public ministrations of our churches.

4. It is our duty, our exalted privilege, also to propagate the Scriptures. This implies that we conserve them in whole and in part—document and truth—under all conditions, and against every foe; but we must, further, use every possible means of spreading the Bible, disseminating its truths, reflecting and enkindling its light, and casting broadcast over the world copies of its pages. Thus ought we to strive to bring mankind into emancipating subjection to the revealed Will of God.

It will be seen, then, how wide and important is the field of operations presented to future Congresses in the present sub-section. The business under this head will include papers in Biblical Criticism, and papers on Bible Societies and their Operations.

We have now presented the sectional analysis and classification of the first department of our congressional work—the Holy Scriptures as the source of our knowledge of Christian morals. This position we hold to be scientifically valid. Is it still objected that our argument begins in a *petitio principii*: that we reason from the assumption of a

personal God—a point conceived to be of the subject of inquiry? We answer:

1. There must be a starting-point for every argument, and that ours is not less valid than that of the physicist. He assumes the existence of a material universe; we, that the Chief of moral beings must necessarily be a person. The physicist holds his assumption to be warranted, since the external universe is visible and palpable; we consider our assumption to be not less so, since the highest visible outcome of 'nature' are persons, and less than a person the First Cause of the 'all things,' the Chief of persons, cannot possibly be. The starting-point of our argument is therefore as scientific and 'positive' as the severest critic or truth-seeker can desire.

2. The same conclusion is reached also through another equally scientific process of reasoning. Moral laws are not mere 'uniformities,' like the so-called 'laws of nature;' but are a species of commands. Is not this a necessary truth? Were ethical 'laws' no more, or other, than those of 'nature,' there could be no morality; obedience would be rendered of necessity, and disobedience would destroy them, since they are thus proved to be not even 'uniformities.' But moral laws being commands, there must be among other implicates, a personal moral ruler to issue them; and their sufficient publication, in order to involve man in responsibility<sup>1</sup>.

3. This further and necessary conclusion is the foundation on which we raise the position occupied in the present section: the Holy Scriptures are the record of the revealed Will of God, the sufficient publication of His requisitions by the moral Ruler of the universe. And since such is the character of the Bible, here is the source whence true ethical science must be derived.

4. It is satisfactory corroboration of our conclusions, too, that among those ethical systems which exclude the materials supplied in the Scriptures, there are the utmost confusion and contradiction; that they tend more or less directly to necessitarianism and materialism, are exclusive of morality, and inevitably either atheistic or pantheistic; and that those

<sup>1</sup> See this argument wrought out fully in the Essay 'On Moral Science,' contained in this volume.

so-called scientific systems present all the appearance of theories suffering from the loss of a most important factor, or from the admission of a heterogeneous element.

But Christian ethics, on the contrary, are consistent, definite, and inclusive of all the facts supplied by the most rigid induction: presenting the aspect of a true and growing science.

To establish our position, then, and to secure the general application of our principles in the cultivation of ethics, is the great work of our new Association.

## SECTION II.

### SPIRITUAL MORALS.

We have devoted the first section to the source whence we derive our Christian moral science—the revealed Will of God. The remaining sections must be occupied with the moral agent who is required to conform himself to that will—with man in his entire nature, and the obligations that accordingly devolve upon him.

Man is a spiritual, a religious being. In the whole department of his spiritual nature and life he is subject to God, and is required to be in ethical conformity to His will. In proportion to that conformity will God and man be in communion or reciprocal intercourse. This is religion; its highest expression is what we understand by worship. But there can be no spiritual life or worship without the knowledge of necessary truth, without faith in it, and in the God who claims our worship. That worship, again, in its expression will assume certain necessary forms,—forms that will embody and promote spiritual communion. The worshipper must further be obedient in his entire life, ‘perfecting holiness in the fear of God.’ And his whole career must be distinguished by usefulness and Christian zeal. Thus will be covered the sphere of man’s obligation as spiritual or religious; and spiritual morals will be further divided into corresponding sub-sections.

The first three commandments of the Decalogue are a summary of these obligations.

The department of spiritual morals embraces Doctrine and Worship.

#### SUB-SECTION I.

##### *Faith : Evangelical Doctrine.*

The first step in religion and worship is the practical acceptance of the implied facts. The exhibition of those facts is *doctrine*; which must necessarily be evangelical. The practical acceptance of them is *faith*,—at once belief of the truth and trust in the person who is the Object of our faith.

1. Of the doctrine to be accepted in faith the primary truth is, the *creation of all things by God*. Hence His claim on our obedience and worship.

The 'all things'—man included—are created by God, mediately and immediately. 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.' He created the visible, material universe out of nothing; the sole cause of its existence is, His efficient will. From its primary state of chaos this earth was evolved by Him into its present order and beauty. He made man out of 'the dust of the earth,' and breathed into him the breath of life, so that he became 'a living soul.' God made man in His own image. Mediatly, too, God continues to be the Creator of all things; for the creatures, the forces and agencies of nature, were not only at first made by Him, but they are continually deriving from Him whatever power they possess. God is thus the Creator of all things, the Creator of every man, mediately and immediately, as we have described.

We have thus prominently before us the great Object of worship—God; the personal Spirit, eternal and infinite, the maker and ruler of the 'all things,' and of man. His claims on us require our most humble submission, our most loving service. We are in the completest sense not our own, but His. He must therefore be enshrined in our spirits, as the great Object of our personal reverence: an awful Presence, from whom we never depart, to the domination of whose Will our own must be in perfect submission.

Here is the great starting-point in that doctrine which must be accepted in faith in order to man's spiritual conformity to the Divine will.

2. The next department of doctrine to be accepted is that concerning man's present condition, with its explanation in *the fall through temptation by Satan*.

In order to religion and worship man must not only know God, but also know himself, and his own actual condition.

Experience teaches us that we are mortal and sinful. But the Scriptures tell us—what our own sense of fitness corroborates—that these conditions are not the original properties, but incidents of our nature. Our first parents were created 'very good,' as were the 'all things.' Made in 'the image of God,' man had natural 'dominion' over the earth with its lower inhabitants. Man's dignity resulted from his rational moral nature, which was perfect. Such moral perfection, however, is consistent only with freedom from sin, and real goodness. The first pair were in this condition, and able to maintain it. Had they done so, they would have known neither sin nor death.

But our first mother, through the instigation of Satan in the form of a serpent; and our first father, through the instigation of Eve, were led to distrust God, to disregard the prohibition involved in the great trial to which man was subjected, and thus to violate the Divine law. Their transgression was their fall; which introduced a moral disorder upon themselves and their descendants, so that 'by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners<sup>1</sup>.' The sinful propensity and actual transgression are consequently universal in our race. And God's law 'concludes all under sin,' the inevitable 'wages' of which is 'death,' physical, moral, eternal<sup>2</sup>.

The doctrine of the fall and depravity of man, the facts of his actual condition, must be accepted and acted on in order to the promotion of spiritual religion.

3. Doctrine would only involve us in despair, were no further truth revealed to us than that already mentioned. The next department will embrace the facts of *human redemption by Christ*—God's only-begotten Son incarnate.

The continuance of our race as we see it—a consideration of the Divine forbearance in punishing, with the mitigations and ameliorations involved therein, and our consciousness of present moral probation,—all tend to suggest the possi-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. vi. 23.



bility of human salvation. Nor is 'the goodness of God' thus indicated delusive.

Holy Scripture reveals<sup>1</sup> that 'God loved the world' of mankind so revolted from allegiance to its Maker; that He gave for its redemption His only-begotten Son; that the Son of God 'was made flesh,' dwelling on earth a man among men; that He 'gave Himself,' in His life and in His death, 'a ransom for all;' that His self-sacrifice on our behalf was an atonement, an objective reconciliation with God; that without this it was impossible—but which now makes it possible—for God, being just, to 'justify the ungodly.' Thus potentially, and in the full extent of actual, individual salvation really, 'by the obedience of One,' 'the many' are 'made righteous'.<sup>2</sup>

We are further taught that Christ Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man, is the mediatorial king of the universe, ruling thus on the basis of His atonement. And that He is accordingly 'able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him;' whilst it is universally proclaimed that 'whoever trusteth in Him shall not perish, but shall receive eternal life.'

This doctrine of redemption, as taught in Holy Scripture, must be accepted in faith, or religion and worship, yea, the whole of man's conformity to the Divine will in spiritual morals, are impossible.

4. But the salvation thus described is objective and potential redemption. It is real. It is possible to all men. But it requires to be made actual and subjective salvation in the persons of individual men. Our next department will therefore embrace the doctrine of personal subjective *salvation by the Holy Ghost*.

Individual faith in Christ is necessary to individual salvation; for 'he that believeth not is condemned already,' and 'shall be damned'.<sup>3</sup> That faith is trust in Christ, or in God through Christ; implying previous hearty belief of the truth of the Gospel with self-surrender to the Saviour. It is firm trust in Him for the salvation sought, and a firm reliance on His faithfulness and love to the securing of that final end.

But faith is 'the gift of God' through the operation of the

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 16, &c., &c.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v. 19.

<sup>3</sup> John iii. 18; Mark xvi. 16.

Holy Ghost. 'The natural (or animal) man discerneth not the things of God,' can neither 'see' nor 'enter the kingdom of heaven.' He is not affected aright so as to exercise saving faith, even when the truth of the Gospel is correctly apprehended by his intellect; he may even the more recoil, the more complete and accurate his knowledge becomes. In wishing to secure final happiness, he does not necessarily desire the salvation of God. Not yet realizing his needy condition as 'blind and poor and naked,' he is far from being ready to yield to Christ implicit submission. He shrinks wholly from that discipline, self-denial, and cross-bearing, which are conditions of deliverance from sin's dominion, and from ethical conformity to Christ. The work of the Holy Ghost is indispensable to the subjective faith and salvation of such a man. He 'must be born again.' The Spirit of God regenerating the soul, 'teaching' and 'drawing' him as 'of the Father,' and thus 'giving' him to the Son, man becomes a penitent believer in Christ his Saviour. Such a man has become truly convicted of sin, is awakened to a lively sense of guilt and danger. He is inspired with a real desire for deliverance, urging him to cry to God for salvation. All self-dependence is extinguished in his heart. The efficacy of the Atonement allays his fears; its application cleanses his conscience and silences its reproaches. The work of the Holy Ghost, who dwells within the soul, is 'the witness of the Spirit,' by whom he is 'sealed to the day of redemption.' The spirit of adoption, the filial spirit, is formed in his heart; so that he can alike call God 'Father,' and reflect the likeness of his Saviour. All this comes of that faith which God gives by the operation of His Holy Spirit: thus is effected the subjective salvation of individual Christians by the Holy Ghost.

In this and the previous departments of truth embraced in the present sub-section, we observe the doctrines necessary to be known, accepted in faith, and acted on in order to true religion and spiritual worship. These doctrines must be watched over and conserved, maintained and defended, spread and applied to the spiritual needs of the nation; a work noble and acceptable to God for the proposed Association.

The business falling under this sub-section of spiritual

morals will include papers in every department of Evangelical Doctrine, and papers on Heresies in Doctrine.

## SUB-SECTION II.

### *Worship : Spiritual Communion.*

The present sub-section embraces the elements of worship in what may be described as its ritual—a ritual promoting, and necessary to, man's spiritual communion with God. We have to do with the solemn acts of religion in its external forms of worship. These acts are at once expressive of adoration, channels of Divine grace to the worshipper, and instruments through which blessing is generally conveyed. In the entire ritual of acceptable worship, the evangelical doctrines just considered will be heartily accepted and thoroughly applied.

1. The first department of our sub-section will be *praise*.

Praise may be considered as including thanksgiving and adoration. Thanksgiving is the offering, in suitable form, the expression of our gratitude to God for His innumerable blessings. Praise is the expression of our recognition of His character, and of our response to it in religious gladness. In adoration we express reverent love to Jehovah, our Saviour—the Father of Compassions, and Fountain of Comfort. And in all these departments praise is suitably offered—being subjectively rendered ‘in spirit and in truth’—in ordinary utterance, or with the ‘service of song’ so familiar to us all. Praise is an indispensable element in worship, one of the highest expressions of the soul in spiritual communion with God.

2. *Prayer* is another department in the sub-section of worship. This exercise includes everything of the nature of supplication addressed to God, with every necessary condition and plea. Prayer, like praise, is indispensable in the ritual of worship. It may be employed in private or public, by one or by many.

3. Another department of this sub-section will be occupied with *reading, meditation, and the use of other ordinances*.

Reading, that is, of the Scriptures and Christian books, is an important means for acquiring increased knowledge of the truth ; for seeking spiritual guidance of the soul in her inner

life, and in its outer expression ; and for the reception of that Divine influence which is found in the communion of saints. Thus, reading is an excellent means of grace, important to the maintenance of spiritual communion with God, and not less a privilege than it is an obligation. It is always an auxiliary to the preaching of the Word ; and in cases of sickness or exile may become its substitute.

Reading, to be profitable, should be accompanied and followed by meditation ; that is, what is read should be well thought out and thought over, that the truth or guidance conveyed may be equally understood and applied ; and that the unction with which it is laden may refresh the reader's soul. We must, however, distinguish between meditation and reverie. The latter is of small value, being little more than listless dreamy reflection ; but meditation is thought practical and thorough. As the engineer who intends to bridge a gulf thinks out every step of each process in his work, and mentally executes in detail his entire project, so in meditation does the Christian reader acquire thorough knowledge of the truth. He who meditates as he reads will understand the author, will 'separate the precious from the vile,' will 'hold fast that which is good,' and will apply the result to his own practical needs. Meditation is thus an important, indispensable means of grace : necessary to the deep sowing of 'the truth' in the heart ; and as requisite in profitable hearing as it is in beneficial reading.

Both reading and meditation, then, are choice vehicles for the conveyance of grace by the Holy Spirit. As such, they are acts of worship, and necessary to the maintenance of communion with God.

Nor must the true worshipper neglect the use of other ordinances. He will, of course, use the public means of grace. Those now specially meant are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are in full consistency with evangelical doctrine, which they indeed embody and adumbrate. They derived their origin from our Lord Himself as positive ordinances. Their observance is binding on every Christian ; and, when properly administered, they are valuable means of grace.

These all, then—reading, meditation, and the use of other ordinances—are at once the privilege and the duty of the Christian worshipper.

4. The last department of the present sub-section is, *preaching and the hearing of the Gospel.*

An important place in Christian worship is occupied by the preaching and hearing of the Word. God speaks to us by the prophets and in His Son. The Word given is a written revelation. Its essence and sum is, the glad tidings of salvation to every one that trusts in Christ Jesus; its expanded utterance is, the whole of the truth revealed in the Scriptures. It is a most important part of worship, then, that the Divine Word be devoutly administered and heard in order to spiritual welfare and communion with God. That Word is the 'seed of the kingdom,' able to save our souls. It must ever be the pure and simple Gospel, through hearing which the unconverted may be saved. It will not less be an unfolding of the entire 'truth as it is in Jesus' in its prolonged ministration in pastoral teaching and application. It is as necessary, too, that every one whom it addresses should devoutly 'hear' it, as that it should be faithfully exhibited. It must be 'heard' in the pregnant sense of the word, equivalent to 'receiving it in the heart,' or there will be no conviction of sin, no conversion of the soul. The Word must be so heard as to be practically accepted, with the faith that brings justification in Christ Jesus, and 'garrisons' the soul with 'the peace of God which passeth all understanding.' It must be continuously heard, in its unfoldings of the whole truth of God, in order to the progressive Christian life, the 'keeping in the love of God,' and the 'growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' which constitute that sanctification that makes us meet for the inheritance of light.

It is sufficiently apparent, then, how important a place in worship and spiritual communion is occupied by preaching and hearing. They are necessary to the maintenance of our own fellowship, and to its establishment in the souls of others.

This sub-section, in its combined departments, embraces the sphere of human obligations in worship. We have considered its expression, its necessary forms, and its aids. These exercised in their true spirit, and in consistency with evangelical doctrine, must promote spiritual communion with God. To promote this, and to extend it, until the nation

becomes subject to God in discharge of its spiritual obligations, is part of the work assigned to the proposed Association.

The business of this sub-section will include papers in every department; and papers on Ritualism, or Errors in Rites and Ceremonies.

### SUB-SECTION III.

#### *Obedience : Scriptural Holiness.*

As faith is necessary to worship, and the knowledge of evangelical truth to communion with God, so are these to that further discharge of spiritual obligations represented in scriptural holiness. These obligations are, to the change of heart and personal trust that bring reconciliation to God; and to the filial life and patient perseverance that characterize the children of our Heavenly Father. These will form the further subdivisions of our subject.

1. The first department in this sub-section must be occupied with *repentance*.

Repentance is a sorrow for sin that brings a change of life. It is godly sorrow — towards God, neither selfish nor servile, and such as God approves. It is an entire change of soul through the grace of Him who 'is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance' unto men. This is the first step in obedience, or surrender to God's rule in the sphere of spiritual morals. It is return to God in order to restoration to, and establishment in, holiness. It is necessary to holiness as it is to salvation. Repentance is of general obligation: 'God commandeth all men everywhere to repent;' 'repent, and be converted,' is the universal call to mankind. And the obligation is the more urgent, since now the grace of God is manifested in the Gospel of Christ our Saviour.

2. *Faith* is another department of the sub-section of obedience, inasmuch as it is another step in spiritual surrender to God. Three things seem included in faith: (1) a cordial acceptance of the truths believed; (2) a vivid realization of them, 'the substance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen;' and (3) a personal trust in God through Christ unto salvation. The Christian possessing

and exercising faith is by it, as with the opening eyes of his soul, placed in vivid relation to the Invisible and the Eternal. A present reality is given to the objects of faith though not seen. His strong trust in his Saviour brings him into personal fellowship and vital union with Him; whilst the continuous life of faith secures unfailing peace with God, and progress in sanctification. And faith, in whole and in part, is an obligation devolving on all mankind. Not to believe in Jesus is the greatest of sins, as it is the test and measure of our alienation from God. The sin of unbelief cannot be forgiven so long as it is continued: considered as resisting the influences of the Spirit, it is 'the sin against the Holy Ghost.' It is the duty of every man—under the Law, and under the Gospel—to believe in Christ unto salvation. Obedience can never be rendered, holiness never begun, until faith be exercised and lived.

3. But a further department will be occupied by *adoption and regeneration*.

Adoption is that gracious act in which men are accepted by God, through Jesus Christ, as His children. This is the relation in which 'every one that believeth,' that is, every Christian, stands towards God. 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a son;' 'I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.' Our blessed Lord teaches us, when we pray, to say, 'Our Father.'

Regeneration is that new-creating work of the Holy Ghost in which we are *born* into the family of God. The necessity and the graciousness of this are apparent. In adoption, a stranger, one not of our own blood, is accepted as a child. Many a master has adopted the child of his bondsman; but after every effort in education and culture, and in the fulness of liberty, there may often appear traces of servile origin, and outbreaks of a servile spirit, so that the father may be constrained to exclaim, 'Ah! any one can see this is not my own son!' Now, corresponding manifestations of previous nature as 'children of wrath' would mark the Christian; but, in regeneration, he is born from above, has the filial spirit, and is conformed subjectively, as he will one day be objectively, to the likeness of his Heavenly Father.

Adoption and regeneration are indescribable privileges, but they are also of general obligation. It is the duty of

every one to have faith unto salvation; to receive that grace that regenerates; to live in the privileges and assurance of his being a child of God. This is necessary to the full obedience, the life of holiness, of which we are treating. 'Having therefore these promises (of God being our Father, &c.), let us' 'perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.'

4. But a further department of our sub-section will be found in the consequent *patient continuance in well-doing*.

The Christian life in its development is a career of obedience and holiness aptly described as well-doing. To repent with godly sorrow, bringing forth corresponding fruit; to believe in Christ unto salvation; to yield the soul to the quickening influence of the Holy Ghost, and to respond with the whole heart to the voice of God our Father in the reconciliation and filial love of His children,—are all acts of obedience, and as such are well-doing. But this is the beginning of a life that will be fruitful in good works—works of righteousness, of equity and virtue, godliness and mercy. The Christian career thus begun must be continued. The inner life must be maintained in continuous faith, and renewed daily at its source by the constant use of means of grace. The pursuit of holiness must continue, each day being marked by real progress. The fruits of righteousness, 'fruits of the Spirit,' must ever appear in the Christian's progressive character, in his walk and conversation. Thus will he be marked by 'continuance in well-doing.' But that perseverance will necessarily be patient. 'Ye have need of patience that, doing the will of God, ye may receive the promise.' Maintaining his piety under the ills of life; against the temptations involved in life in the present world; and in the flesh assailed by Satan; through the painful discipline, chastisement, and trial, which make up the path of tribulation, and the delay of the Saviour's coming, the Christian's perseverance will be '*patient continuance in well-doing*.' And this perseverance must be maintained to the end; for thus only can the Christian enter the Paradise of God. Perseverance, then, the '*patient continuance in well-doing*,' is necessary to the completion of that obedient holiness to which the present sub-section is devoted.

The business of future Congresses under this head will comprise papers in every department, and papers on the State of Religion.



## SUB-SECTION IV.

*Usefulness : Christian zeal.*

How naturally this flows from the subject of the previous sub-section ! A holy life must in itself be useful, not only to the Christian's own interests, but to others. Yet must he further devote himself to the conservation and spread of Christianity, in order to promote the welfare of mankind. In doing this he will be serving his Lord in Christian usefulness ; while his zeal will be in proportion to his holiness and love. To the practical consideration of this department of spiritual morals the present sub-section is devoted.

1. One great part of such usefulness will be found in *maintaining the truth that saves.*

What that truth is, and in what method it saves, we have already seen. That truth must be maintained. Its importance cannot be exaggerated. If it should become mixed or modified, the salvation of men will be imperilled : how much more so were it lost ! And who should maintain the truth if not the Christian, who is saved through its instrumentality ? Its maintenance, as its exhibition, is committed by our Lord to saved men. The Christian will maintain the truth by understanding it, prosecuting its study, and living upon it as the aliment of his religious life. He will maintain it by teaching it and by exemplifying its principles. He will vindicate it against its assailants to the extent of his ability—a department of usefulness always necessary, but never more so than now. And he will maintain the truth by promoting its extension to all mankind. To this the Christian is devoted alike by the commission of his Lord and by His constraining love.

2. The Christian will be useful, further, in zealous *promotion of the worship that edifies.*

Such worship we have already described. It is based on the evangelical doctrines implied in spiritual communion with God. This worship is at once acceptable to our Heavenly Father, and edifying to the Christian who offers it. But the case being so, no other 'worship' can be profitable. The Christian, accordingly, is against all 'worship' that is not evangelical, as alike unacceptable to God and unprofit-

able to man. But the true worship, that edifies, he uses and offers. He will promote it in its purity and spirituality by every means in his power. He will in this matter be very zealous for the glory of his Lord. He would spread over all the earth the means and the practice of such worship: for were it universal, so would be the subjection of mankind to God in spiritual morals. And, in order to advance this, the Christian spreads the truth and life of the Gospel through every agency available.

3. A further department of usefulness is found in the Christian's duty to *exemplify and defend the privileges of the Gospel*.

Those privileges are mainly the *status* and freedom of the sons of God. 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption;' 'the liberty of the sons of God.' These privileges will be prized and enjoyed by the Christian; in whose life and character they will be exemplified. And they will be defended by him against every assailant. The Christian will thus be Christ's champion against every heretical teacher that would obscure the doctrine of adoption, against every oppression that would endanger Christian freedom, against all usurpation of lordship over souls, or of the supreme prerogative of Christ as Head of His Church, whether of priest or Church, of pope or king. A department of usefulness this always required, and never more than in the days in which we are living.

4. Another department of usefulness requiring Christian zeal is found in the Christian's duty to *extend the Redeemer's kingdom*.

This is secured by the instrumentality of saved men in the propagation of the Christian religion. Every disciple is under obligation to use his utmost influence for his Lord in this department of work. Thus the personal influence of the Christian, as all that he possesses, should be devoted to Christ. In his life and example, in his speech and prayers, in his word and work for Jesus, the Christian can be very influential in propagating true religion. Thus, indeed, is he required to 'let his light shine before men.' And this ought the Christian to do, first, in the centre of his own home; next, among his friends, neighbours, and associates; then in the Church; and, finally, to the world. This was Christ's

idea of the action of His Church upon mankind : that each Christian should be as 'the seed of the kingdom' cast over the world, permeating every class, spreading through every tribe ; that through their testimony and influence, organizations and work, all nations should be evangelized. This department of usefulness is thus seen to be very important, as its discharge will require Christ-like zeal and love.

The business of this sub-section will embrace papers on Missions.

We have thus presented an analysis and classification of the subjects embraced in the second Section of our Congressional work. The great object to be sought is the cultivation and application to the nation of this department of Christian ethics. In so far as evangelical doctrine and spiritual worship are promoted among men will they be conformed to the Divine will in their spiritual morals.

### SECTION III.

#### INTELLECTUAL MORALS.

Man is not only a spiritual, but also an intellectual being. He is intelligent and rational, and so capable of understanding as to involve responsibility. In this part of his nature, as in every other, he is subject to the moral law of his Maker. The obligations under which man lies in regard to his intellect, its use, its culture, and the application of its knowledge in the regulation of life, form the department of Intellectual Morals. In discharging these obligations, man will understand, i.e. intellectually realize, his responsibility and the moral law which he is required to obey ; he will acquire and use the knowledge that constitutes Christian intelligence ; his intellect will give intention and moral quality to his actions ; he will acquiesce in his condition as under the law of labour ; and he will thus proportionately advance in true civilization. In so far as the intellectual

morals of a community shall approximate to this standard, they will be acceptable to God.

The summary of duty in intellectual morals contained in the Decalogue is found in the Fourth Commandment.

Their entire department is the sphere of ethics and philosophy.

#### SUB-SECTION I.

##### *Human Responsibility.*

Man is a moral agent; that is, he is capable of performing moral actions. He universally feels himself to be so, and individuals have ever been treated as such by society. His actions are felt to be at once voluntary, and as having respect to some rule or law which determines their quality as good or evil. Thus is realized human responsibility; that man is accountable for his state, his actions, and the course of his life as a moral agent.

1. The first place in the present sub-section must be given to the consideration of man's *conscience and will* in regard to his state of *probation*.

Conscience has often been described as a separate faculty; but this is incorrect. A better definition is, that conscience is the judgment exercised in the department of morals—a consciousness of our actions in their moral quality. We remember them, judge their character as being good or evil, as a whole, in their motive and their aim. Butler represents conscience as being 'a principle of reflection distinguishing, approving, or disapproving our actions.' This may be received with the exception of the word 'faculty.' He further asserts conscience to be supreme in the soul; yet it is not absolutely so. It is not itself our highest law; it is but an interpreter. And conscience is only right as its monitions agree with that law. The office of conscience is regulative of human conduct and life: itself being within man a witness for God.

The will is that faculty of the mind which chooses between alternatives, and consequently determines. It is free in so far as is necessary to moral agency; that is to say, the agent is free to choose and determine. Otherwise there can be no responsibility. The sense of such freedom is the universal experience of mankind.

Now, the combination of these conditions in man as a moral agent—conscience, will, and freedom—is evidence of our state of probation, and constitutes one side of human responsibility.

2. Another equally important side is found in the announcement of the moral law to which we are subject—the *Divine will* as revealed in the *Scriptures*.

This ground we have traversed in our first section, on 'The Source of Christian Morals.' The Bible is a revelation of our Moral Governor. His wish or command, our rule of life, is there made known. This is the law in regard to which every action is felt to be good or evil, whether consciously used as the moral standard or not. The law with its sufficient announcement is as necessary to constitute man a responsible being as his possession of conscience, will, and freedom.

3. The next place in our present sub-section must be given to the consideration of that part of the Divine law which regulates man's time and occupation, or the institution of *the week and the Sabbath*. The summary of the law of our time is found in the Fourth Commandment.

The antiquity of the Sabbatic institution is indisputable. Its observance is so widely spread, and its relation to sacred things so important, that it must be referred back to the creation of man. We can conclude no otherwise than that man's time is thus divided and regulated by the Divine will. The week, with the Sabbath, is founded on God's week of creation and rest<sup>1</sup>, and formed part of the Edenic life of man. The Sabbath seems referred to soon after the Fall, as the 'process of time,' or 'end of days,' i. e. last day of the week<sup>2</sup>; and the week later in the record of Noah, 'He stayed yet other seven days<sup>3</sup>.' This division of time is a marked feature of the Mosaic law, and is the key to its entire scale of seven in the regulation of feasts, sabbatic years, and jubilees. In the Fourth Commandment this primeval institution is most formally tabulated as part of the written law of God; and in the Christian dispensation the same law is continued with renewed sanction, the only change being of the positive part as to the day of rest. The principle of one day in seven remains, and the substitution of the first for the

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. iv. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. viii. 10.

seventh is made by the original authority of God—that is, of Christ through His apostles.

Here, then, we have a claim made upon all our time by our Divine Creator and Governor. Our time is to be devoted to God. Six days of the week He commands us to labour; but the one day in seven is ‘the Lord’s Day,’ ‘the Sabbath of Jehovah our God.’ Here is provision for man’s entire nature: for the physical, labour and rest; for the mental, change of direction and mood, with the means of retrimming the mind’s lamp; for the moral and social, the home with the domestic affections; and for the spiritual, means of intercourse with God. In this institution all our relations are ennobled. The Sabbath should be the day of rest—shared in by all, even by our cattle. Work must be reduced to its minimum; the rest and quiet should be suggestive of heaven. It is a day on which the afflicted may forget his care, the poor his penury, and the bondsman his life of oppression. On the Sabbath the inner man should find instruction and training in intercourse with God and the study of His Word. The provisions of the Sabbath are a protest against materialism, an evidence of man’s intelligence and spirituality; on that day mind triumphs over its physical surroundings, and seeks victory over the material world. In the Divine enactment of the Fourth Commandment is completed the circle of man’s duty to God in the first table of the Decalogue.

Now, into time thus regulated, man is born, and, as a moral agent, is involved in corresponding responsibility; and in so far as he shall acquiesce in the arrangement and conform himself to this law, will he answer the test it supplies in the sphere of intellectual morals.

4. The last department in our present sub-section is, *the sacredness of human life and the homogeneity of the race.*

The oneness or homogeneity of our race is involved in man’s common responsibility to his one Maker. We need add here nothing on this point to what we have written on philology and anthropology in our first section.

But moral agency involves also the sacredness of human life; its continuance is the temporal sphere of man’s probation. Time, opportunity, means of faithful obedience, all are involved. Over life as embracing these no one has authority but God; therefore man may neither slay his brother nor

himself; and 'Thou shalt not kill' is an indispensable command in the second table of the Decalogue.

We have thus considered certain elements and conditions of man's responsibility. To cultivate the science of these, and to get it applied to the nation, is part of the great work of our proposed Association.

The business of this sub-section will embrace papers on Ethics<sup>1</sup>.

## SUB-SECTION II.

### *Christian Intelligence.*

By this must be understood that commerce of knowledge which should mark the intellectual progress of a Christian community. To establish and promote such intelligence is a necessary department of intellectual morals.

1. The first place in the sub-section will accordingly be assigned to *sacred learning*, as *theology and ethics*.

By sacred learning we understand that knowledge which has for its object (1) the interpretation and vindication of the truth revealed in Holy Scripture in whole or in part; and (2) that necessary to the application of such truth to man, his life, and his work. Of the former, a primary place must be given to theology. This<sup>2</sup> is the scientific treatment of revealed truths concerning God. Those truths are revealed in His works and in His word. But while the science includes natural as well as revealed theology, it is properly altogether Biblical. As such it excludes traditional and philosophic systems. Its principles being found in the Word of God as embracing an interpretation of His works, the theologian seeks to construct a complete, systematic, harmonious whole out of the truths revealed concerning God. The result will thus be no mere excogitations of the theorist; but, by a patient investigation of the objective revelation, in a scientific logical process of induction, or deduction, the

<sup>1</sup> There the whole scheme printed on page 443 will find a place.

<sup>2</sup> *Δόγος περὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ.*

building up of those materials into the superstructure of theology.

Another, scarcely less important, place must be assigned to ethics as a department of sacred learning. This is the scientific development of what man ought to be in character, and to do in conduct and life; including the source and nature of its obligation with the means of its faithful performance. This science, like theology, is one not of excogitation, but of patient scientific exploration in the realm of objective revelation. It is, as we have already seen, Christian moral science, which is the only true science of ethics. It will thus be an application of the written Word of God in the determination (1) of the ground of moral distinctions; (2) of the criterion of rightness and wrongness in actions, the natural conditions and principles of virtue; (3) of the place and operation of conscience in the human economy; and (4) of the laws and divisions of duty. Thus will be interpreted, systematized, and intellectually applied the Scriptural teaching concerning the whole sphere of man's obligation to his God. And this science will necessarily be Christian: not only as being the ethics of Christianity, but as the ethics of the Christian man; since none can acquit himself of his obligations to God except in the Christian life and experience of a saved man. Accordingly, Christian ethics will treat of man's obligations as viewed in the light of the facts of human redemption by Christ, and as subjectively attaining and retaining the salvation so provided.

2. The next department of the present sub-section must be assigned to *general knowledge*, as *history*, *philosophy*, &c.

Sacred learning tends to bring the human intellect into subjection to Holy Scripture as the revealed will of God; general knowledge tends to inform, cultivate, and refine the intellect, in order to equip it for its entire work of regulating the man. Of general knowledge a most important part is history. This is the narrative and scientific arrangement of events and facts in human affairs. It deals with the course of mankind in the whole, or in any portion, of its duration; with that of any nation or other section of the human race for a longer or a shorter period; and it describes the progress and issue of crises in human experience of every degree of importance. History will deal with the course of the visible Church in ancient and in modern times. It will



include what is called the philosophy of history, with all judgments pronounced upon persons and things. Nor will biographical narrative, or any record of human experience, be excluded from its sphere.

So wide at least is the field of general knowledge covered by history. A department of literature so important should possess, in addition to other properties, certain moral qualities making it sound. Its description should be accurate, its narrations truthful. Its criteria should be Christian, or its judgments will be unsound. As an attempt at human guidance by the results of cumulative human experience, its light should be pure, consistent with that of Scripture, and truly helpful to mankind.

Philosophy also occupies an important place in general knowledge. In its restricted meaning, it is the science of first principles, and deals with causes and laws. In this sense the term is almost limited to mental science; but in its wider significance philosophy is the sum of systematized human knowledge, in metaphysics, physics, and ethics. The modern use of the word restricts it to the system of inductive, as distinguished from deductive, philosophy. As such, its only evidence is of fact; and its only authority, of experience: to the application of which principles is due the immense development of modern science. Taken in its all-inclusive meaning, however, philosophy should be saturated with Christianity in both spirit and method. Its great object should be the discovery of truth; in pursuit of which it should be subjected to the Divine word and works. The philosophic temper will be alike unbiassed and believing. It will be devout in the same degree as it is instinct with the love of truth. The inquiries being honest, their results will be accurate, and the progress made will be great and satisfactory. The word and works of God—His moral and His natural laws—will thus be visibly consistent and harmonious, the complement of each other. Philosophy then, like history, is a most important part of general knowledge, familiarity with which is necessary to Christian intelligence.

3. A further department in this sub-section must be given to *science, abstract and applied*.

Science is the term used to express the sum of our systematized knowledge in every department, but especially that known as natural knowledge. It embraces effects with

their causes; the phenomena, the forces, and the 'laws' of nature. It stands thus, in contrast, on the one hand, to literature, and, on the other, to art. Abstract science is defined as the knowledge of reasons and their conclusions; every department included in the definition is an abstract science. Applied sciences are those which have left the region of abstraction and become concrete, in being applied to practical life and the exigencies of human nature. It will be seen how important is the entire field of science to the formation of Christian intelligence.

4. *Useful and ornamental arts* are also necessary as a department in this sub-section.

These are distinguished from the sciences as a more distinctly practical application of the results of science in regular precepts to the necessities and refinements of human life. The arts are accordingly either useful or ornamental. The useful arts address themselves to man's wants; the ornamental to his tastes and luxuries. The ornamental include the fine arts, which by some are limited to painting, sculpture, and architecture; while by others is included every art that gives pleasure by an immediate impression on the mind, whether the appeal be made through the eye or through the ear. Thus music will be considered one of the fine arts. The arts, then, both useful and ornamental—considered as an application of accurate knowledge, as refining and elevating the mind, and as thus tending to morality—form a very important element in the cultivation of Christian intelligence.

To promote the Christian intelligence of the nation; to conserve and cultivate accurate knowledge in every department; to watch over and promote a literature and science that shall prove a blessing to mankind—this is no mean work for the future Congresses of our Association. The business under this head will comprise papers in every department, and papers on Literature and Science.

### SUB-SECTION III.

#### *The Duty and Dignity of Labour.*

Man, as an intelligent being, unlike the irrational beasts, is required to labour. In the Edenic life of our first

parents, the command was to work ; to 'dress' the garden, and exercise 'dominion over the works of God's hands.' Its modification after the Fall was, toil—labour with the 'sweat of the brow.' It is so now. The law of work embraces all mankind, and regulates all labour with sweat of brow or of brain. The command of God, regulating the industry of man, is found in the Decalogue: 'Six days shalt thou labour,' &c. This is the law of human labour in both letter and spirit.

Now this condition must be understood and acquiesced in by man as an intellectual being. He must intelligently devote himself to the prescribed duty; he should also realize its dignity. To the consideration of this subject our present sub-section in intellectual morals is devoted.

1. The first department must accordingly be assigned to the consideration of *man's dependence* involving the *law of work*.

Man is dependent not only on God, as the Supreme Bestower of blessings, but on nature and the world in which we live. For example, he needs from these the supply of his food, raiment, and shelter. But this dependence involves, as it is intended to do, the necessity of labour. Nature, so bountiful when solicited, so luxuriant in that which demands skill and industry to make it available for human requirements, is reluctant until man evokes her blessings with the necessary work. He must till the ground; he must labour in seed-time and harvest; he must prepare his food; he must feed, clothe, and shelter himself; he must provide for the vital exigencies of his household, through the anxious industry of skilful labour. Here, then, is the call to work. In the nature of things as now known, as well as in the written law, man is dependent on labour for his support.

2. But every supply to meet human needs is bounteously provided by God. The next department of this sub-section is, accordingly, of *nature's resources through God's bounty*.

The needs of mankind are actually supplied by those resources. They are extracted and developed infallibly on the application of human labour and skill. All the produce of the efforts of man are of the treasures of nature, supplied by the bounty of God. And practically, those resources, like the Divine beneficence, are inexhaustible: as witness the trade and commerce of the world. What goodness is

displayed in this provision to man as required to evoke it by work ! And how truly elevated and dignified is man by the law of labour—to be a co-worker, almost a co-creator with God !

3. The next department of the sub-section must embrace the *organization of labour*, involving the relation of *masters and men*.

Labour has a natural tendency to organization, since the moment children begin to work with and for their parents, or one man calls another to his assistance in toil, a new relation is established. Organization is inevitable ; made so by social and economic exigencies. There have ever been, accordingly, as there will continue to be, persons and classes related to each other as employer and employed—the hirer of labour, and the worker that sells it. Such organizations will necessitate still further. The labourer, especially, will require union, and a strong *esprit de corps*, in order to mutual comfort and security, if not for protection. Out of these tendencies have sprung guilds, clubs, and unions—and not only among the workers of mankind. But labour, in its organizations, and the reciprocal duties of masters and men, should be conformed to the revealed will of God.

4. Another department of this sub-section will embrace *human progress*.

That mankind has made great progress is apparent ; nor is that progress yet arrested. We refer mainly here to material advancement. Man has taken possession of the earth and subdued it. Its treasures, its forces, its ‘laws,’ have been made subservient to human needs. In the progressive success that has attended skilful and organized effort, there has been corresponding advance in the intercourse of nations, in human intelligence, and in the amelioration of man’s general condition. Labour has expanded into commerce, and commerce has been the pioneer of civilization ; until at length human progress has reached a height hitherto unparalleled in history. It is required, however, that this progress should be secured—as it can only be properly secured—in human conformity to the Divine law of work.

Thus, then, have we considered the sub-section of the duty and dignity of labour in regard to the revealed will of God. The business under this head will comprise papers on Capital and Labour.

## SUB-SECTION IV.

*True Civilization.*

By civilization, we mean the cultured social life of organized society. There is, however, a spurious civilization. If any given people are ignorant of the true God, whether they be idolatrous or atheistic, their so-called civilization will be spurious. Accordingly, China, Hindostan, many cities of Europe, though often described as civilized, are not so in the true sense. There can, indeed, be no real civilization, except as man and society are recovered to Christian virtue and to God. To understand and accept this position, to promote and cultivate such true civilization, is an important part of intellectual morals.

1. In considering this subject, the first department must embrace *man's dignity*, which can only be realized in his *piety*.

By piety we mean that entire religious and moral life in which is faithfully discharged our duty to God and our duty to our neighbour. Destitute of this—still more so if impious—man possesses no dignity, and can never realize the Divine idea of his own worth. But just in proportion to his conformity to God's will in personal religion, he will exemplify and realize what we mean by man's dignity. He becomes an immortal being in fellowship with God, who is at once his Maker and Redeemer, his Friend and Father.

2. Another department of our sub-section will be devoted to the consideration of *manliness* as exemplified in proper *self-reliance*.

Man ought to be self-reliant—not as independent of God, but in proper sense and degree independent of his fellows. He should not be burdensome to others, though ever ready with sympathy for his neighbours. He should unite the two precepts in his practice, 'Bear one another's burdens,' and, 'Every man shall bear his own burden.' Without this self-reliant independence there can be neither individuality of character nor integrity of life. But wherever it is found, there is exemplified that manliness which is necessary to the progress of true civilization.

3. Another department in the sub-section of civilization is that *refinement* which is promoted by *intelligence*.

We have already treated, in Sub-section II., of Christian intelligence. Its cultivation tends to an elevation of mind, a width of view in the exercise of judgment, and a chastity of taste that constitute refinement. That is, the cultured mind and the cultured society are exempt from the selfishness, uncouthness, and degraded sentiments and habits found among a barbarous people. But informed with necessary and accurate knowledge, disciplined in the processes of Christian education, and conformed in feeling and habit to an elevated Christian standard, the highest refinement is produced, and which is indispensable to true civilization.

4. *Humanity* or *charity* is also necessary to civilization.

Humanity is a word expressive of tender, sympathetic benevolence, the Christian term for which is charity or love. It is that feeling which God requires us to cherish towards one another: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' This love will express itself in deeds, working no ill to any, but blessing all with good. Marked with the most amiable of qualities, it is in the highest degree attractive. It is indispensable to the Christian's inner life, and never passeth away: it is the greatest of the 'abiding' virtues. It finds illustrious examples in the love of humanity felt by the Church's greatest men. Its more nearly perfect illustration is found in the Apostles, and its complete example is Christ our Lord. 'He loved us, and gave Himself for us.' This exaltation, this 'enthusiasm of humanity,' is the prime characteristic of the Christian religion. Therefore, as humanity shall abound, so will true civilization be promoted.

We have seen, then, that true civilization will be secured in the piety, manliness, refinement, and humanity of the people. The business of this sub-section will include papers on Civilization.

We have now defined the third section of practical ethical science—that of Intellectual Morals. This department of obligation the proposed Association will seek to cultivate and apply to the individual and the nation, as a step in the direction of bringing into ethical subjection the entire man. This section, therefore, presents a great sphere for the com-

bined operations of the united Evangelical Churches. Let the national intellect become regulated by the revealed truth and will of God, and most important progress will have been made towards securing national religion.

## SECTION IV.

### SOCIAL MORALS.

WE have now to consider the obligations involved in man's social nature. He is a social, as he is a religious and intellectual being. In this as in his other relations, he must be conformed, individually and socially, to the revealed will of God. The ethical obligations arising from this relation of man to the family and society, will form the section of Social Morals.

A summary of these obligations is contained in the fifth, sixth, and seventh Commandments of the Decalogue.

The section will embrace the consideration of institutions and discipline.

The sub-sections will be identical with the several organizations of society, and their corresponding discipline, viz. the Family, the School, the Church, and the Nation.

### SUB-SECTION I.

#### *Domestic Discipline : the Family.*

This is the first form of social life to be considered, as it is first also in natural order. Because of human degeneracy the family is not synonymous with the Church, or even with a 'church in the house;' nor is the aggregate of families identical with 'the Church in the world.' But the family is a noble embodiment and nucleus of social life in all but its most exalted type. The discipline of the home, with the corresponding ethical obligations, therefore occupies an important place in social morals.

1. The first place in this sub-section must be assigned to the *duty* of the members of a family *to* their *superiors*. These superiors are, of course, parents and guardians, masters and elders.

Children are given to the home by our Creator and Bene-

factor. This not only involves parents in obligations of a special kind, but also the children themselves in corresponding responsibility. Their duty to parents is the burden of 'the first commandment with promise: Honour thy father and thy mother,' &c. This forms an admirable transition from the obligation of the first table of the Law to those of the second—our duty to our fellow-men. In Lev. xix. 2, 3, the veneration of parents is united with the sanctification of the Sabbath, as representing together in substance the entire law of love; the criteria and conditions of the internal resemblance of man to God. Gratitude alone should urge to filial obedience. But the sense of obligation and reverence of parents ought never to be relaxed. Parents stand to children as in the place of God. They ought therefore to love, reverence, and obey their father and mother; to respond to their nurture and training by a docile and plastic disposition. In earliest years the children should become disciples of Christ, and enter upon the life of Christian piety. They ought to pass off in their maturer years alike into full Church life and work, and into the responsible heads of houses which Christianity contemplates. Thus the conscientious discharge of filial obligations is necessary to the ethical conformity of society to the revealed will of God.

Other superiors may exist in the family besides the parents, and sometimes in their stead. The duty of children will be correspondent to the change of relation, in spirit, as above described.

Again, the parents are in many cases master and mistress. This involves both them and their servants in the special obligations of this relation. Accordingly, servants are required to be faithful and vigilant in the discharge of duty. They ought to respond to every means used to promote domestic piety and welfare. They should reverence and obey the heads of the house. The servants' duty ought never to be rendered as 'eye-service'—service neither real, constant, nor thorough, but adapted to the 'eye' of their superiors. Service should be thorough and faithful, not as unto man only, but as unto God, the great Master of all. By service thus rendered, even menial life may become exalted and Christian, an acceptable offering unto God.

2. But there are inmates and connections of the family that are equals, as brothers and kindred. The consideration of



their corresponding duty, *kindness to equals*, will occupy the next place in this sub-section.

Where children are born into a house, the fraternal obligations are involved in the fraternal relation. Their mutual love should ever be maintained. Homes, too, are related to each other. There are collateral members and branches of the family or families; children have become themselves heads of houses. In the family constitution, the reciprocal duties of each relative have not lapsed because of changes and the formation of additional bonds. Every member of each family, as long as they all shall live, are 'members one of another.' They ought accordingly to discharge their reciprocal duties. They are required to be kind to each other in love. Thus will their common welfare be promoted, and themselves approved by God the Father of all.

3. Another department of this sub-section will be devoted to the consideration of *the family institution* and *marriage*.

This institution is of primeval obligation and of Divine origin. It has neither been abrogated nor modified, that social man shall dwell in families, the centre and bond of which is marriage. This institution is founded on human nature and its requirements. God saw that it was 'not good for man to be alone;' He therefore 'created him male and female.' The first pair were united in the first marriage, and made the first home in Eden. In marriage conformed to the revealed will of God, the husband and wife are constituted 'one flesh;' plurality of husbands or wives is excluded. 'They twain' are 'one flesh;' they are socially the equals of each other, although the wife, as last made, is subordinated to the husband; and the bond is dissoluble only by death. Such are the exalted obligations of this institution; prohibiting alike impurity, polygamy, and the debasing subjection of woman found amongst oriental and barbarous peoples.

4. The last place in this sub-section will be given to *family love*, embracing the home, children, &c.

A proper marriage instantly makes a home; and in the blessing of children family life expands into its wider sphere. The husband and wife as 'one flesh,' are the chiefs of the household. But the husband is head of the wife, as Christ is Head of His Church; and accordingly the man is principal in the family.

The husband ought to love his wife as he loves himself, to nourish and cherish her in all affection and godliness. The wife is to love, reverence, and obey her husband. She is to submit herself to him 'as unto the Lord,' 'in everything.' She is to seek 'the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit,'—a jewel sparkling with the light of heaven—after the example of 'holy women in the old time.' Husband and wife together are required to supply a home for their children, for whose welfare they are as parents responsible. The father is to love, to provide for, to educate and train his children. The mother is to supply the affection and nurture that constitute her special function. Both are to consecrate and bring up their children in 'the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' Their home with all its inmates—servants and others as well as children—are to be 'sanctified with the word of God and prayer.' Their domestic life ought to be as continuous worship. The household should be 'commanded' as a godly house and seed. The children's welfare—physical and intellectual, moral and spiritual—should ever be promoted and secured. God intends it to be so through the special adaptations and fidelity of the heads of the home, by means of their example, instruction, and discipline; children and inmates being ever embosomed in the generous atmosphere of Christian domestic life.

We have thus covered the ground of domestic discipline as implied in the ethical obligations of the family institution.

The business of this sub-section will comprise papers on Family Duties, Social Evils, &c.

## SUB-SECTION II.

### *Scholastic Discipline: the School.*

The importance of the school in the section on Social Morals can scarcely be exaggerated. It is that social organization by which the young are educated, taught, and trained for the careers of subsequent life. Scholastic discipline, with its necessary organizations, ought to equip the young for life in all its aspects—intellectual, social, and religious. Only thus can we expect the social and corresponding morals of the nation to be promoted.

1. In this sub-section, the first department to be named is *primary education*—its sphere, the common school.

This follows on infant training, which supplements and aids that furnished by nature, and the infant's growing experience. Primary education, as the early stage of scholastic discipline, lays the foundation and implants the rudiments of all subsequent training. The first openings of the mind are watched over and directed, and the faculties of the child are developed from stage to stage. As rudimentary, it is a privilege not to be withheld without sin and social injury from any intelligent child in the nation. It is essential, however, that primary education be conducted on ethical principles, in subjection to the obligations of social and intellectual morals, or it cannot be sound. It is not less than a department in Christian training.

2. *Intermediate education* is the next stage of scholastic discipline : its sphere, the grammar school.

Intermediate education follows on primary, which it supplements and develops. This higher discipline is intended mainly to give power to the mind, and develop its faculties, to lay the foundation of sound learning, and to implant the seeds of culture. But intermediate education ought to be conducted on the ethical principles of Christianity, or it will neither be morally nor scientifically sound.

3. *Higher education*,—its sphere, the college,—will form the next department of scholastic discipline.

This is a later stage in the training of the young, supplementing all preceding. Here great progress in mental ability and refinement is sought to be effected. It is often the stage of discipline whence the youth passes into the fixed careers of life. It is indispensable that this training also should be conducted on principles conformed to the revealed will of God.

4. The last department of the present sub-section is *university education*, as the highest of all.

In the university, scholastic discipline reaches its culmination. Here the powers are developed to the utmost, the foundations securely laid for the widest and most accurate learning, and the young man equipped for the varied careers of mature life. This, equally with all education, should be conducted on Christian principles. And the privileges of a university education ought to be accessible to the entire nation.

In considering the school and its discipline, we have found that, in every stage, education will be morally and intellectually sound in proportion to its conformity to the ethical principles and the truths of the revealed will of God. Here arises the controversy known as the Education Question. It is generally admitted by the Churches that education, as a whole, ought to be Christian, and that the nation should be educated. But the exigencies of the country in its entirety are pointing to a separation of the so-called secular elements in education from its religious and moral: the former to be generally secured by the State, the latter to be left to the Churches. Thus the question of national education is likely to be settled on purely secular principles, in disregard of ecclesiastical demands, and in despair of such a union of the Churches as will secure the education of the whole nation. Such a settlement may be the best possible in present circumstances; but it is a severe reflection on the Churches. Many evils must result—as, e. g., the secularization of the public mind similar to what is generally apparent on the Continent; while a proportionately increase of responsibility will devolve on Christian parents and on the evangelical denominations. It may well be, however, that such a settlement will give to Sunday schools the opportunity they are needing, of complete adaptation to the evangelization of the country. If, then, the Christian conscience of England is to influence the Legislature in this and kindred questions, or, in failure of that, to secure general Christian training of the young, we can scarcely do so with more effect than through the operation of a Christian Moral Science Association.

The business of this sub-section will comprise papers on Education.

### SUB-SECTION III.

#### *Ecclesiastical Discipline: The Church.*

The Church is the highest form of human society; its life, the highest social life. The discipline of every other social institution should find issue in the life of this. In the Church is realized the redemptive ideal of human brotherhood, the ideal family and home.

1. In this sub-section, the first place must be assigned

to the *Headship of Christ*, which is the common bond that secures the Church's *unity*.

The central Person in heaven—the central Person in the Church triumphant there and in the Church militant on earth, is Christ glorified and enthroned. And the great personal object of faith presented to the gaze of perishing man, who must be drawn to Him in order to salvation, is the same Mediator and Lord. He is the Church's Head, in whom the Divine and the human meet, 'God over all,' 'manifest in the flesh,' 'blessed for evermore.' In Him the Church finds her centre and bond, vitally uniting her to the Divine. He is her Redeemer, her Life, her Lord and King. In her behalf, even in His official character as Mediator, He is Head over 'all things,' and He is ruling and overruling to that glorious consummation when 'He shall have subdued all things unto Him,' and 'God shall be all in all.'

Christ is the only Head of the Church; with Him none may be associated, whether sovereign or priest, patriarch or pope. In heaven it is impossible; on earth it is unnecessary, seeing He is Himself ever with His Church, 'even to the end of the world.'

Each member of His Church, as the entire body, is in personal living union with his Lord, bound to Him in 'the faith that worketh by love,' receiving from Him 'eternal life,' and animated by the Spirit of Christ dwelling 'within him, the hope of glory.' Thus the entire Church is bound together in one, in relation to each other and to Christ the common Head, in closest ties of affection and of life. Round Him the whole Church gathers, the family of God round their 'Elder Brother,' the 'Everlasting Father;' they the highest society of men, He the source and bond of the loftiest social life.

2. The next department of our sub-section will obviously be that concerning the Church of Christ: *the Membership of the Body*, with the *Holiness of its Character and Life*. 'The Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.'

'The figure employed to set forth the character of the relation subsisting between the Church and her Lord is equally beautiful, touching, and suggestive. He is the Head—the intelligence, life, and bond—of the Church; she is His Body, the individuals of her communion being as the body's

several members; the Spirit of Christ is the great soul filling and animating the whole body. How close and vital the union, how complete the identity of interests, of Christ and His Church, since she with Him forms one body! Thus is she His representative and organ on earth; in her He is visible in a fuller incarnation, through which He will secure that 'the earth shall yield her increase.' Now each Christian is a member of the mystical Body of Christ. 'Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.' Membership in the Church, visible and invisible, is therefore an obligation and a privilege. Each Christian is 'grafted into Christ.' The character of each, as of the whole, should be holy. The work of each member, as of the one body, should be to extend the kingdom of God. Here, then, we have individualized the true Christian society, as we have seen its centre and bond. The Church is man in the highest social condition.

3. But fellowship, the communion of saints on earth secured in their common *fellowship of the Spirit*, will form the next department of this sub-section. Here becomes visible the *Catholicity* of the Church.

Each Christian is 'born again,' 'born of the Spirit;' 'quickened' by the Spirit; the Christian is also 'led' by Him, 'possesses Him:' 'the Spirit' dwelling within him is 'the witness' that he is a child of God. With the Christian, accordingly, is 'the fellowship of the Spirit,' the 'communion of the Holy Ghost.' But the aggregate of the Christians so 'filled with the Spirit' make a larger 'communion'—that of all the saints. Their common possession of the Holy Ghost constitutes that general fellowship of the Spirit concerning which we write: He not only dwells within each Christian, but is also the common life of all—the Spirit of Christ animating His Body. Such fellowship, accordingly, is the corporate family life of the Church. Its existence, wherever manifest, is actual Christian life, the note of a true Church, and the uniting bond of true Catholicity. Within the family it is brotherly love, binding all together in closest ties, and filling them with corresponding sympathy. Such love covers a multitude of faults; is patient and forbearing, all-enduring and forgiving; is full of gentleness, and unconscious of itself as humility; it leads the saints in honour to prefer one another, and to seek, not his own, but another's welfare. This affection is expressed in intensest sympathy,

as the love of Christ for His Church; that sympathy embraces each Christian, 'bearing one another's burdens;' 'weeping with those that weep; rejoicing with those that rejoice.' It flows over the Church in her corporate capacity, establishing a loving community of labour with the pecuniary and other burdens that Christian work involves; while 'brotherly love' as a powerful, swollen stream, overleaps its boundaries, passing off as largest-hearted 'charity' towards all mankind.

4. The last department of the present sub-section is, accordingly, the corresponding *Co-operation of Christians to do good*, in which will be manifested the Church's *Apostolicity*.

When our Saviour was on earth 'He went about doing good.' His entire mission and work were 'doing good.' His whole rule as Mediatorial King is supremely and exclusively good. As, during His sojourn among men, He drew His disciples into fellowship and co-operation with Himself in performing 'the works of Messiah,' so does He associate His Church in all her organizations and members in the fulfilment of His whole redemptive purpose concerning mankind. This became clearly manifest in the character and work of the first Christian Churches, in the nature of that mission which devolved on the Apostles. They were sent of their Lord to evangelize the world. The Churches caught the drift and intensity of the mission. And in the Christian societies of the period was seen the note of true Apostolicity. The same obligations are still on the Christian Church. In all her societies, in all her members, there should be, not only individual and separate efforts put forth, but also a general co-operation in 'doing good,' in order to the salvation of mankind. Thus only can she manifest her Apostolicity, an indispensable note of the one Church of Christ; thus only will she be seen to 'work the works of Christ,' until men shall exclaim, 'This is indeed He that was to come, and we need look for no other!'

Thus we conceive of 'the one, holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church,' her organization and her discipline. Here we find embodied that social life which, because redemptive, is the noblest on earth.

The business under this sub-section will embrace papers on Church Questions.

## SUB-SECTION IV.

*Political Discipline : The Nation.*

The nation is that larger society formed by the aggregate of all the others in a given country or among a given people. In proportion to the soundness of every minor society, family, school, and church, will be the soundness of the nation. The whole, as the parts composing it, must be conformed to ethical principles, in order to its true welfare. But these are Christian. The national or political discipline must therefore be in accordance with God's revealed will, or government and rule, with their results in the national condition, will not be satisfactory. To Christianize the nation will be to secure corresponding elevation in social morals.

1. The first subject to be considered in our present sub-section is *Government*, which should ever be exercised *in dependence on Christ*.

By government we understand the rule, in superintendence and guidance, exercised by the united legislative and executive power of the nation. Such government is necessary to political well-being; but, in order to promote the interests of a people in the highest degree, that rule must be ethically conformed to the revealed will of God. Society, as the individual, is under moral obligation, the principles of which are immutable. The great Head of society, its King, is, and can only be, God. Earthly rulers are His viceroys; in so far as they so rule, they are, like David, 'men after God's own heart.' A nation thus governed, able and free to discharge its ethical obligations, may become a Christian society. The ruling power should govern, and the political discipline ought to be maintained by state and people, in complete dependence on Christ, the nation's true King. And thus will be secured the liberties and welfare of the country.

2. The next department embraces *Citizenship in Fidelity to Christ*, as also necessary to national discipline.

Every proper inhabitant of the country is a citizen, sustaining corresponding political obligations. Not only is he required to love his neighbour as himself, but he has to discharge the special duties of a citizen of the nation. He must in this obey the law of Christ given in the Word of God.



He must recognise 'the powers that be' as 'set up' of Christ, his great Ruler. Those powers he must obey: 'submitting' to 'the ordinances of man' 'for the Lord's sake.' He must be loyal; 'honouring the king.' As an obedient, good subject, discharging his individual, social, and political duties, he will be a Christian citizen, living in fidelity to Christ. On the citizen's as well as on the ruler's side proper political discipline ought to be maintained; then the national well-being will be promoted.

3. But the next department must be assigned to the consideration of *Laws and their Administration for the Good of All*. Without this there can be no beneficial political discipline.

Laws, or the statutes of the realm, ought ever to be in ethical conformity with the Law of God, the letter and spirit of which ought to be incorporated in the legislation of the land. The nation's laws, when so conformed to the revealed will of God, ought to be equitably administered, in order that the welfare of each citizen and that of the nation may be secured. Where these conditions of laws and their administration are violated, national welfare is not promoted, and social morals are proportionately deteriorated. But where our conditions are found, there general liberty, happiness and prosperity, wealth, peace, and godliness, are the secured blessings of the nation.

4. Political discipline thus promoted will become manifest and completed in the *patriotism* of the people; which, however, will be fully *consistent with love to all men*.

Love of country—land and people—is a Christian virtue. Patriots are numerous among the examples of Holy Scripture. With the Israelite, patriotism was a distinguishing element of piety: his fellow-countrymen were 'the people of God;' the land of his fathers was sacred as the gift-home of Jehovah. Patriotism is a virtue founded in human nature, as it is exalted in Christian ethics. The land of one's birth, the people of one's king, the country composed of an aggregation of families in which our own finds a widely-spreading place—our country, must ever be cherished in our deepest affection. This is even included in the love we should bear to all mankind. The latter obligation urges to universal evangelization; the former to 'begin in Jerusalem and in Judea,' that is, at home. Patriotism in harmony with love

to all men, will be an outgrowth of sound political discipline.

Here, then, we have considered the nation and its proper discipline as an important sub-section of Social Morals. This is a wide and noble field for the congressional operations of the proposed Association : to watch over the government and social condition of the nation, to apply Christian moral science to every question in sociology, and to cultivate such appliances as shall tend to elevate the condition of the masses.

The business of this sub-section will embrace papers on National Affairs.

The ground of Social Morals has now been traversed in this fourth Section of Christian Ethics. The institutions and discipline of society—the family, the school, the church, and the nation—have been exhibited. The importance of this branch of moral science can scarcely be exaggerated. To secure its cultivation and to promote its application to general social life must tend to elevate the nation and secure its highest welfare. This will be the noble work of the united evangelical Church in the proposed Association through its future Congresses.

## SECTION V.

### MATERIAL MORALS.

MAN is not only spiritual, intellectual, and social; he is also a physical or material being. He is embodied in a material structure, which places him in sensuous and local contact with a visible world; human nature and life are therefore conditioned by matter. As living under these conditions, man is recognised and governed by God. In the physical, as in the other departments of our nature and life, the revealed will of God is our only moral rule. Here, then, is the sphere of material morals, or the ethical obligations under which man lies in his physical nature and life.

The Decalogue contains a summary of our duties in this department in the eighth, ninth, and tenth Commandments.

The entire section embraces Economics and Finance.

## SUB-SECTION I.

*The Law of Production.*

Considering man in his physical condition as needing material possessions for the supply of his needs, we must first ascertain the law of production. In the treatment of this,

1. The primary place must be assigned to the consideration of *man's necessities*, and to his consequent subjection to the *law of labour*.

Having examined this subject in another aspect, as the third sub-section of Intellectual Morals, we may here occupy the less space with our exposition. Man's physical needs of food, clothing, and shelter require to be met. Their supply is provided for by God on the express condition of labour. The 'work' assigned to the first man unfallen, the 'dressing of the garden,' as part of that 'work,' becomes, to degenerate man, labour, with sweat of brow and brain. This labour must be exerted upon an earth that is for our sakes 'cursed;' reluctant to 'yield her increase,' except to industry untiring and skilful. Thus labour is now a natural as well as an imposed obligation. Idleness is a sin; as our forefathers phrased it, is 'the mother of all vice.' Idleness entails want, misery, ruin. It is an attempt to evade an obligation divinely laid upon us, and is direct disobedience of God's law,—'Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work,' &c. The law of labour, regulating material man in the supply of his physical needs, is, that he shall work; that this shall be on six days of the week only, and that our work shall be done 'as unto God.' Then will our time and our labour be sanctified and blessed.

2. The next department of our sub-section is, to consider *God's provision* for man's needs: in this is found *the reward of industry*.

The resources of nature are practically boundless. Here is provision divinely made for human necessities. Those resources yield themselves to the unwearied industry and skill of the worker; while the acquired results of his energy accrue to him as the reward of his labour, the possessions given him by his beneficent Maker.

3. The next department must therefore contemplate man

in corresponding capacity, as the subject or servant of God receiving from Him blessings for the use of which the servant is responsible: *Christian stewardship*, associated with its recognition in *tithe and offering*.

Man is the servant of God, by whom he is created, preserved, and redeemed. His life-work of obedience is the rendering of service to his Lord. In this capacity man's needs are supplied by the Divine beneficence in profusest bounty; the servant has not only supplies, but is entrusted with treasures of blessing. The property and the person alike belong to God. Man is accordingly responsible for his use of the material treasure which is God's gift; and thus the servant of the Lord becomes His steward. This relation with its responsibility is to be recognised by man. The first-fruits of his possessions are to be presented to God in an act of worship, at once in expression of gratitude, as a small return in recognition of obligation, and as consecration of the entire prosperity received. In Scripture tithe and offerings we recognise the obligation and institution of which we write. In the consecration of property and recognition of stewardship, in the giving to God of tenths, in primeval times, we find all the fixity of a divinely-originated institution. This conviction is strengthened by the consideration of two tithes at least yearly being a requisition incorporated in the Levitical law: one as the equivalent of the land withheld from the Levites—tithes to their brethren; the other in provision for festivals and temple service—tithes to the Lord. A large margin was also left for free-will offerings to Jehovah—the additional loving expression of devotedness to God. Nor is either stewardship or its proper recognition in tithe and offerings essentially modified in the Christian dispensation. In the New Testament, as in the Old, man is ever represented as the steward of God; his wants are still superabundantly supplied by Divine beneficence; it is equally man's duty—with the stronger inducements of the redemptive love of Christ—to recognise and express corresponding obligation. Whatever may become of the Mosaic enactments of Judaism, not a hint is expressed as to the relaxation of the primeval institution of tithe and offerings to the Lord; but the entire relation and responsibility of stewardship assume a tenderer meaning and a deeper obligation. The measure and proportion is left to Christian freedom, intelli-

gence, and love: a 'law of liberty' that can be fulfilled by no less than the largest obedience and fulness of affection.

4. It will further be seen that *human prosperity* is secured by, and consists in, *the Divine blessing* resting on the faithful servant and steward.

Prosperity in material things is not synonymous with abundance of temporal possessions. It is more properly, yea exclusively, secured by the blessing of God. 'The blessing of the Lord maketh rich.' This accrues as the reward of obedience. If, then, man labours for the supply of his wants, his industry is rewarded; and if he consecrate these rewards in divinely-appointed method and degree—notwithstanding mysterious and painful exceptions—he will be prospered of God. He may not have riches, but he will have welfare: not the wealth prized by the secular, but the blessing that maketh rich without the addition of sorrow. Were such a state of things general, the true prosperity of the nation would be secured.

The law of production as revealed to us by God is, then, that we must labour, and administer the results of our work, as servants and stewards; then shall we receive reward and blessing, thus will our material prosperity be established.

The business of this sub-section will embrace papers on Pauperism, Idleness, &c.

## SUB-SECTION II.

### *Law of Property.*

By property here we understand the material possessions that accrue as the rewards of man's industry—our actual worldly wealth. There is, necessarily, a law by which this is regulated, involving those who have property in corresponding ethical obligations.

1. The first ethical condition of property is, that it is *honestly* or *equitably obtained*. Our possessions ought ever to be acquired in the use of legitimate means, and in accordance with the law of equity and love. Else the Divine rule will be violated, our riches will be 'corrupt,' our 'gold cankered,' and our 'garments moth-eaten.' Property can be ours only on this ethical condition.

2. It is equally a moral obligation that, in so far as we

retain our possessions, we should *keep* them in the exercise of personal *honour*. To retain property, in whole or in part, when duty requires us to distribute or relinquish it, is not less a violation of the law of God than to obtain it by iniquity. Such property becomes accursed, and its possessor falls under the Divine ban.

3. It is a further obligation that the distribution of property, or *spending*, should be exercised with *bountifulness*. Spending is a necessary condition of possession; but, in distributing our wealth, we should never exhibit either a parsimonious and grudging spirit, or an avaricious or covetous disposition. On the contrary, we should display, in proportion to our means, an open-handed, bounteous generosity, similar to that exhibited in the beneficence of God.

4. And—as the last department in this sub-section—with all our property, we should *joy in God*, as our true and *only portion*. Our best riches are not of this world. Our treasure, like our citizenship, is in heaven. This we should constantly realize. And, in so far as this world's possessions may be entrusted to us, we ought to use them in strictest accordance with the revealed will of God. Thus, and thus only, can we become 'rich toward God,' and have Him for our everlasting possession.

These several conditions, then, are embraced in the ethical obligations of the law of property.

The business of this sub-section will include papers on Commercial Morals, Systematic Beneficence, &c.

### SUB-SECTION III.

#### *The Law of Expenditure.*

As there is a law of the production and possession of property, so there is a rule for its expenditure. This law is imposed in the revealed will of God, and it is founded on the exigencies of the human conditions.

1. Under this head, the first place must be given to the *present support* of the responsible person and his household. It is obviously necessary that a suitable proportion of the property obtained and held on the ethical conditions described should be devoted to its possessor's present support. This department of expenditure may be conducted on a

liberal scale, and adapted to the family's social position. But the outlay should be in everything regulated by the revealed will of God, avoiding extravagance and luxury inconsistent with the Christian character. Expenditure in present support of the household conducted on these principles is fully consistent with the obligations of stewardship.

2. The *education of children* is another department of expenditure in accordance with the law of God. It is not only the duty of a man to provide for his household, but also to 'train up' his children in education of them for the careers of mature life. This involves not only the parental example and guidance, but such supplemental education as necessitates pecuniary outlay.

3. To provide for *Divine service* is a further object of legitimate expenditure. The service of God, in the aspect now viewed, embraces everything necessary to the maintenance of Church life and work. Expenditure on this is necessary, since on man devolves the obligation of the worship of God and the extension of His kingdom. Pecuniary expenditure is needed in the arrangements of public worship—in structures, officers, and cultus, and in the educational, philanthropic, and evangelistic work of the Church. The money so required must be supplied by men, and proper provision for it ought to be made in the economic and financial arrangements of the family. The method and scale of such provision from each man's income, inculcated in the revealed will of God, we have already exhibited in our first sub-section. Provision for Divine service in scriptural method is a necessary condition in the law of expenditure.

4. It is further right that a suitable proportion of income be devoted to the *future provision* of the family. This is in accordance with that allowed prudence which foreseeth and provideth against a coming evil. Christian prudence is not forbidden in the precept, 'Take no anxiety for the morrow,' since part of the duty of to-day is to recognise and await approaching obligations. Within limits, it is present duty to provide for to-morrow's needs,—only to the exclusion of sinful anxiety, by child-like trust in God. Legitimate possession of considerable property is also recognised in Holy Scripture. But the capitalizing of income for future wants is to be done in accordance with revealed ethical obligations. It is never to be effected inconsistently with the conditions of

Christian life. The property must be obtained in equitable ways ; it must be the savings of an income consecrated by moral conformity to the will of God ; and it must be secured without covetousness, injustice, or oppression.

Such is the law of expenditure, the subject of our present sub-section. In so far as we regulate all our pecuniary outlay by this law, we shall be conforming our material morals to the revealed will of God.

The business of this sub-section will embrace papers on Church and Missionary Finance, House Economy, &c.

#### SUB-SECTION IV.

##### *Capital : its Rights and Duties.*

The possession of capital, or the accumulated savings from income, is legitimate on the conditions already mentioned. Capital existing, then, its possessor has corresponding rights or just claims on society, while his possessions and rights involve him also in consequent obligations. The rights and duties of the capitalist are the subject of the present sub-section.

1. In this, the first place must be given to the *rights* of the capitalist. As a member of organized society, he has an equitable claim on the State for *the protection of his property* as well as of his person. By political arrangements and legal restraints, capital ought to be protected against every kind of fraud, dishonesty, and depredation.

2. But the capitalist has responsibilities as well as rights ; he has corresponding *duties* to discharge. Of these, a large proportion may be classed as the *duty of bearing his proportion of the national burdens*. The burdens of the nation involve immense pecuniary expenditure, which none but the people composing the nation can supply. Every man has, therefore, to sustain his own proportion of responsibility—while that ought ever to be regulated by his means and possessions. On capital, therefore, the great weight of national pecuniary responsibility should rest ; and the capitalist ought willingly to contribute his portion as equitably assessed.

3. There are, further, legitimate *uses* to which capital may be put : as the development of the nation's resources, the cultivation of trade and commerce, the amelioration of the



people's social condition, &c. In such use of capital, the general employment of the population, national progress, and the freedom of society will be promoted.

4. And the *results* of such regulation of capital will be seen in the *advancement of civilization*.

The business of the present sub-section will include papers on the Dwellings of the Poor, National Taxation, &c.

We here close our sectional classification of the subjects to be discussed in future Congresses. Based on the whole of man's complex nature, it is intended to cover his entire moral life, and accordingly to embrace the complete sphere of Christian work.

To cultivate the science of Christian ethics in its entirety, and to get it applied in its various departments to the nation, is the great work to which we call the united evangelical Churches. Only in this direction can national religion be secured. While in so far as true ethical science shall be perfected, and the nations become conformed to its requirements, will be visibly united the scattered elements of truth found in the most discordant systems. 'Let all these theories of virtue, or the virtuous emotions, be affirmed, and with limits and restrictions we may admit them all. To Hobbes it may be said, Virtue does lead to the good of the community. All law ought to be in harmony with it; and we obey both for fear and for conscience' sake. To Cudworth and Clarke it may be said, that there are moral relations as certain as mathematical relations, and that morality is in the highest degree reasonable. To the rest it may be said, in all virtue there are qualities which gratify the taste as much as they satisfy the reason. It promotes happiness, material and spiritual, our own and that of others, and so is its own reward. It is useful, peace and prosperity ever following in its train; nor is there any surer way of securing "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" than by diffusing it. Virtue is the highest "excellence," the most perfect "order." It excites sympathy; and the connection between virtuous acts and correspondent feeling is one of the most instructive instances of those laws of suggestion on which Hartley and Brown insist<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Note on p. 391 of Angus's edition of Butler's Analogy of Religion.

## CHAPTER V.

### OBJECTS TO BE SECURED BY THE PROPOSED ASSOCIATION.

THE great work assigned to the Churches united in Association and Congress is becoming still more apparent. But in prosecuting that work the Christian Moral Science Association will, it is confidently hoped, achieve other important objects that are neither being sought nor secured by existing organizations. A few of these objects we proceed to specify in the present chapter.

I. The successful operation of our Association will *realize* to the eye and the mind of the nation *the Visible Church of Christ*.

She does exist, and she is assuredly visible; but her existence as the Body of Christ is not yet realized. To the eye of her friends she appears a 'broken,' dislocated body; in the opinion of her foes she is fundamentally and hopelessly divided. And truly she is found existing in isolated communities, having little external unity, and perhaps less ecclesiastical intercourse. She by no means fills the eye of the nation as a visible embodiment of Christianity—the one representative and organ of her Lord. What *is* visible to Europe is an ecclesiastical organization of great antiquity and prestige,

wide-spread and of vast pretensions, purporting to be the only visible Church of Christ—apostolic, catholic, *Roman*! But *her* we hold to be apostate—the ‘mother of harlots,’ not the bride of Christ. It is necessary that the true Church should appear: that her existence and actual unity should become realized by the nations. She ought thus to ‘arise and shake herself from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments, and shine in the glory of her Lord.’ Then will she be seen ‘fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.’

But, with all the longing for unity and growing Christian spirit, what religious community is seeking intelligently and of set purpose such a realization of the visible Church? Or what organization is securing even incidentally that object? The most ‘catholic’ associations of Christian people are failing to achieve this result. But it will be an immense advantage to the Christian Moral Science Association that, in proportion to its success in organization and work, this great object will be secured. In the mutual recognition of members of all evangelical communions as catholic fellow-Churchmen; in their visible association for the united prosecution of their common work; in their communion of prayer, counsel, and enterprise,—the evangelical Churches will be seen to form one true body of Christ, realized to the eye and the mind of the nations.

II. The proposed Association will, further, not only manifest but *promote the unity of evangelical Christendom*.

That oneness is real, alike considered as subjective or objective. Subjectively, the Churches are one: the faith and life, the possession of the Spirit and conformity to Christ, of every Christian and each true

Church, being identical. Objectively also are they one, their differences notwithstanding: they cling to one Bible and preach one Gospel; in fundamental truths their creeds are in agreement; they can worship and work together with cordial brotherly love. They have all in fact but 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father.' That this internal and external unity should be promoted is indispensable in the exigencies of our times. But it is not definitely sought, it is not being actually secured, by any existing organization. We believe, however, that the Christian Moral Science Association could not fail, while pursuing its great purpose, to still further promote the ecclesiastical unity that it will have succeeded in manifesting.

III. In the definite pursuit of its great purpose our Association stands absolutely alone. It seeks *to create* and cultivate, develope and *apply* to mankind, *a true moral science*, the science of Christian morals. In pursuing this object, it seeks *to rouse and quicken the public conscience*, to inform, to elevate, and to guide it, not only in this country, but in other Protestant nations, in all matters affecting their moral and religious welfare. This object, sought by no other society and by no Church, will be secured by this Association in so far as the Divine blessing shall make it successful.

IV. The errors of our time are exceptionally afflictive. They are more subtle, fundamental, and widespread than those of any previous age; and correspondingly there are alike a more general unbelief on the one hand, and on the other a more determined superstition. In the latter direction we have the so-called Catholic Revival afflicting our own land, tending to

assimilate the Established Church to Rome in doctrine and ritual, and seeking ecclesiastical fellowship with the apostate Papal communion. In the former direction, we have the prevailing rationalism of our times, with its many ramifications. It is always critical and sceptic. In criticism it tends to the elimination of the supernatural, in person and operation, even when inconsistently avowing itself theistic. In philosophy it is necessitarian and materialist, leaving no room for that pure, personal Spirit who is our Maker and God. In science, as in speculation, it is tending to the same issue, the materialism of physicism and the atheism of the 'positive' science of Comte; while in the whirling, seething gulf of infidelity and superstition, numberless immortal beings are endangered and wrecked.

Now these errors need a more effectual counter-action than they are as yet receiving. No organization is setting itself thoroughly to this most important work. But it is an avowed object of our new Association *to meet the errors of our time with the united intellectual and spiritual resources of evangelical Christendom*, and thus more effectually to combat prevailing heresy and superstition.

V. The vices of our age are not less afflictive. In justification of our statement we need only refer to the brief survey of the nation given in our second chapter. But we specially mention a few:—The prevailing neglect of public worship, a neglect that leaves half the population outside our churches and chapels; with the consequent secularity and profanity of the masses. The self-indulgence, the pleasure-seeking, and the Sabbath-desecration so prevalent, are the distress of the Christian Church. What shall we say of the

national licentiousness and impurity? or of drunkenness, to which we owe nearly all our crime and pauperism? while covetousness and dishonesty are most widely spread. That these vices are being resisted by the efforts of countless philanthropic men by means of various agencies, we most gladly recognise, and that every worthy Christian Church is doing its part in the good work in its own neighbourhood. But these giant evils will not yield themselves to partial and divided efforts. The vices of our age will be resisted successfully by nothing less than the most strenuous combined assault of the members of all the Churches of Christ in catholic organized efforts. All Christians are in common responsible to their common Lord and Saviour for the recovery and elevation of the fallen masses of our great towns and cities. But *the recognition of such common responsibility, and the Catholic combination of Christians of every name in this enterprise*, is the special function of our Association, and the work to be achieved will present a vast field for its labour.

VI. The entire missionary enterprise, its scale, power, and resources, is coming up for revision and improvement. That enterprise embraces the world as its field. The true Churches of Christ seek the reformation of all corrupt communions, the conversion of the Jews, the salvation of the Mohammedan nations, and the evangelization of the heathen, as well as the successful prosecution of the work of Christ at home. But the scale of the operations of any Christian society having any of these objects in view, or of all such societies together, is not less inadequate to the enterprise than it is unworthy of its greatness. We are rejoiced to know the great development of Christian missions

witnessed in the present century. But it is not less true that, so recently as 1861, the entire strength of Protestant missions of all the world was 51 societies, employing 12,000 agents, occupying 1200 stations, having 335,000 communicants from heathendom, 252,000 scholars, 460 students preparing for the ministry, sustained by an income of £860,000 per annum. This scale of missionary work is miserable indeed, when placed in contrast with the myriads and necessities of the unchristian world on the one hand, or on the other, the wealth and numbers of evangelical Christendom. The enterprise must be projected on a far nobler scale, if it is to be speedily successful. Of the 1,290,000,000 of human beings said to be now living on earth, not more perhaps than the odd 90,000,000 can be described as Protestant Christians, who accept the Bible as the sole rule of faith and practice. A vaster agency and a much more lavish pecuniary expenditure can be applied to Christian aggression in all the world by 90,000,000 of Protestants; and such will need to be applied, if these are to win heathendom to Christ. Now what existing organization is adequately meeting, directly or incidentally, this great missionary question? But the Christian Moral Science Association will tend to accelerate *the projection of a worthier scale of world-wide aggression*, since it will equally promote a consideration of the nature of the work, and of that Scriptural method of finance which will supply adequate funds for every possible Christian enterprise.

VII. Nor is it too much to say, that in tending to secure these several objects, while pursuing her one great work, the proposed Association will be *hastening*

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*that day* when ‘the earth shall yield her increase.’ That day is predicted and promised; its coming is the issue of the present dispensation; its blessings are the subject of our Saviour’s intercession. But its advent is not a question of times, hours and days, so much as of the conjunction of favouring conditions. ‘The set time to favour Zion’ is ‘when her sons take pleasure in her dust.’ So when the necessary conditions of the Church and the world shall conjoin in the ripeness of events, then will dawn that day—‘the heathen’ will at length be given to the ‘Son for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.’



## CHAPTER VI.

### PROBABLE OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED AND ANSWERED.

EVERY great and good enterprise originated among men has been met with objections, hindrances, and opposition. We know no exception from this rule. Not an invention adapted to improve the material condition of the nation has escaped. The ameliorating efforts of every philanthropic society are put forth, as they were originated, against objections and resistance. Christianity itself, with its Divine Founder, is ever opposed by the severest antagonism, and its battles to-day are not only against the grosser guilt of mankind, but also against the subtlest objections with which it can be met.

It is to be expected then, it is certain, that the Christian Moral Science Association will be met with many objections. Its originality and importance even will be occasions of resistance. Nor will the very bitterest opposition be wanting, since it is in its very nature opposed to the latitudinarian, superstitious, and vicious evils which abound.

We accordingly propose, in this chapter, to anticipate and meet the more important probable objections that may be urged.

I. It may be said that the evangelical Churches are very numerous; that they are very much isolated, if not estranged and alienated, in their separate existence and work; and that the difficulty of bringing members of all these bodies together in the way proposed will prove insurmountable.

To this objection we reply, (1) If our Association is a proper organization, and it would be right for Christians to unite in it for the purposes proposed, no difficulty whatever ought to hinder the attempt. Had difficulties that seemed at first insurmountable been allowed to prevent projects of importance, the grandest enterprises the world has seen would never have blessed mankind. (2) But if indeed the estrangement of the Churches is such as the objection assumes, that very difficulty does but urge the more strongly the formation of our society; such isolation and alienation among evangelical communions ought immediately to be subdued. (3) It is not proposed, however, that the uniformity in literal symbol, in ritual, or in organization of these Churches be sought. Nor is it required that they become amalgamated. It is their recognition of each other as true Churches of Christ; the mutual recognition of their members as catholic fellow-Churchmen; and the union in the Christian Moral Science Association for common prayer, counsel, and work, under the guidance of the united wisdom, and with the aid of the combined resources, of all the evangelical Churches. To compliance with this requisition, the difficulty objected presents no insuperable barrier.

II. It may be further objected, that the Churches are jealous of each other; and that all attempts to enlist their members in any proposed organization not likely

to be exclusively, or at least mainly, advantageous to their own communion, will but raise that jealousy into fierce opposition. It may be said that this difficulty is insurmountable.

To this we may reply partly as above. We prefer, however, merely to say, that the objection has another side. It is a plain acknowledgment of the necessity of an effort such as is now being put forth. The jealousy described ought not to exist—ought immediately to be overcome.

III. A more forcible objection may be anticipated from the votaries of the so-called ‘Moral Science’ which as yet possesses the mind of our country. The platform of our Association being right, *that* is, not a true science of ethics, its spirit, method, and results alike being unsound. Here is direct antagonism; here will be the sharpest conflict in the fight. For the current ethical science puts forth the highest pretensions, requiring the Holy Scriptures themselves to be excluded from its processes, and even to be conformed to its results. Its hold on the mind of scholars and of the educated classes is unquestionably firm. And any attempt to supersede it, or even to stultify it, will assuredly provoke the fiercest hostility and the most embittered attacks.

To this we reply, (1) HERE IS OUR GREAT OCCASION, our *raison d’être*; and to meet this difficulty with success, the very grandeur of our enterprise. (2) The allegation only shows that Christian thinkers have hitherto been guilty of a strange oversight; since, in the later half of the nineteenth century, our work ought not to remain unachieved. And (3) We are but assured that the world’s enmity to spiritual religion

and to its God has still to be encountered by His Church: the old, old conflict, never to cease until He shall have finally made 'His enemies His footstool.'

IV. It may be a further objection, that leading Churchmen are disposed to treat the efforts of younger and humbler brethren with disregard, if not dislike; that consequently, at best, the progress of the Christian Moral Science Association would be exceedingly slow; and that the Churches ought to be discouraged from making the attempt.

But we reply, (1) This is no valid objection: it is an accepted condition of our enterprise, for which we are accordingly prepared. (2) That such difficulty has been the uniform experience in all cases similar to our own, and ought no more to deter us in our efforts than it has those who have preceded us in most important undertakings. The whole missionary enterprise would have been slain in its birth had its founders regarded too much similar discouragements. (3) In so far as we are right, 'they that are for us are more than they that be against us.' With truth and rectitude, God and the angels, on our side, we can afford to smile on the futile coldness and frowns of those leaders who are themselves discredited by the fact that the enterprise is left to younger and humbler men.

V. The last objection we shall mention as probable is, That the gigantic nature of our enterprise, as contrasted with the weakness of the instruments by which it is sought to be achieved, is sufficient discouragement—a prediction of certain and conspicuous failure.

But why need we reply to this objection? In so far as our Association may attempt the work of God, and be in sympathy with His purpose of salvation, how-

ever humble the instrumentality, we are not weak. We are engaged in an enterprise that cannot finally fail; we receive aid from Him who 'makes perfect His strength' in human 'weakness;' and we are running to a goal for a prize of which 'He has said He will give it us.' Therefore we will glory in our 'infirmity,' that we may be filled with 'the power of Christ;' 'for God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty;' 'and things that are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh shall glory in His presence.'

## CHAPTER VII.

### CONCLUSION.

THE work assigned to this Essay is now completed. We have shown the place of the Christian Moral Science Association in the scheme of work committed to the Church by her Lord. The necessity for our enterprise has been exhibited in a survey of the condition of the British people—a survey whose proper effect should be to rouse the whole Christian community into united, general, self-denying effort. That our Association is practicable and proper, and that its work is of the greatest magnitude, we have urged as a further stimulus to its formation. The vast range of important subjects that will arise for the consideration of future Congresses we have endeavoured to classify in a practical analysis, in order that the several topics may receive equal treatment. We have urged the special advantages which our Association will probably secure in the regular prosecution of its work—Christian objects of immense importance, that are neither being sought nor secured by any existing organizations; and we have anticipated and answered the most serious objections with which our scheme will probably be met.

It but remains, in conclusion, that we commend our entire subject to the most earnest, prayerful consideration of our readers. May we be permitted to say to them—Clear your minds of bias and prejudice; let no imaginable self-interest interfere with your reception of our position and co-operation in our enterprise. ‘Search,’ try, ‘prove’ whether ‘these things’ presented to you ‘are’ indeed ‘so.’ ‘Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.’ ‘We speak as to wise men; judge ye what we say.’

We rejoice to hail the proposed Association as one of the noblest of those which are ‘preparing us for that diviner future which shall yet burst on this ransomed world. Wearily have the years passed, we know; wearily to the pale watcher on the hill who has been so long gazing for the day-break; wearily to the anxious multitudes who have been waiting for his tidings below. Often has the cry gone up through the darkness, “Watcher, what of the night?” and often has the disappointing answer come, “It is night still; here the stars are clear above me, but they shine afar, and yonder the clouds lower heavily, and the sad night-winds blow.” But the time shall come—and perhaps sooner than we look for it—when the countenance of that pale watcher shall gather into intenser expectancy, and when the challenge shall be given with the hopefulness of a nearer vision, “Watcher, what of the night?” and the answer comes, “The darkness is not so dense as it was; there are faint streaks on the horizon’s verge; mist is in the valleys, but there is radiance on the distant hill. It comes nearer—that promise of the day. The clouds roll rapidly away, and they are fringed with amber and gold. It is—it is the

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blest sunlight that I feel around me. Morning!—It is MORNING!”

‘And, in the light of that morning, thousands of earnest eyes flash with renewed brightness, for they have longed for the coming of the Day. And, in the light of that morning, things that nestle in dust and darkness cower and flee away. Morning for the toil-worn artisan! for oppression, and avarice, and gaunt famine, and poverty are gone, and there is Social Night no more. Morning for the meek-eyed student! for scowling doubt has fled, and sophistry is silenced, and the clouds of error are lifted from the fair face of Truth for aye, and there is Intellectual Night no more. Morning for the lover of man! for wrongs are redressed, and contradictions harmonized, and problems solved, and men summer in perpetual brotherhood, and there is Moral Night no more. Morning for the lover of God! for the last infidel voice is hushed, and the last cruelty of superstition perpetrated, and the last sinner lays his weapons down, and Christ the Crucified becomes Christ the Crowned. Morning! Hark how the earth rejoices in it, and its many minstrels challenge the harpers of the sky—“Sing with us, ye heavens! The morning cometh, the darkness is past, the shadows flee away, the true light shineth now.” Morning! Hark how the sympathetic heavens reply, “Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw herself, for the Lord shall be thine Everlasting Light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended!”

‘It is Morning! “The planet now doth, like a garment, wear the beauty of the morning.” And the light climbeth onward and upward, for there is sacred



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Noon beyond. That Noon is Heaven: 'AND THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE <sup>1</sup>!''

The volume of which this Essay is a part will speak for itself. The widest possible diffusion of it is to be desired.

1. It is presented as a basis and symbol of the Christian Moral Science Association. Here are exhibited our project, our principles, and the means by which our great end is sought. The perusal of this work will supersede the necessity of further preliminary inquiry and explanation.

2. A wide circulation is desirable further, that Christians of all evangelical communions may be induced to join this society in large numbers. This is necessary, under the Divine blessing, to that measure of success which we anticipate. Thus will our resources, our *prestige*, and our power be adequate to the greatness of our undertaking.

3. The volume will further conduce to the more intelligent discussion of the questions before the future Congresses. This is of great importance. And it may be hoped, that a careful perusal of this volume will prove a useful preparation for engagement in congressional work.

4. It is further sought, by the extended diffusion of these Essays, to stimulate the Christians of other Protestant countries to originate similar organizations. They are needed wherever the true Church of Christ is found. And every reason urged for the establishment of our Association in Britain is applicable to the case of all Protestant nations.

<sup>1</sup> Punshon's John Bunyan.

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5. And, in any case, this volume is a permanent record of the means adopted for the establishment of the Christian Moral Science Association by its original promoters. While their devoutest aspiration is, that their whole enterprise may redound to the glory of God.



*Objects, Officers, Operations, Principles, and Publications of THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN SYSTEM-  
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April, 1860, to Promote by the Press, Platform,  
Pulpit, and Professor's Chair:*

- I. CONSCIENTIOUS GIVING (Gen. ii. 17; Prov. iii. 9, 10, etc.)
- II. PROPORTIONATE GIVING (Gen. xiv. and xxviii.)
- III. SYSTEMATIC GIVING (1 Cor. xv. and xvi.; and 2 Cor. viii. and ix.)
- IV. CHEERFUL GIVING (Rom. xii. 8; 2 Cor. ix. 7.)

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**OPERATIONS OF THE SOCIETY.**

THIS Society has been established to promote the principle and practice amongst all professing Christians of setting apart on the first day of the week, for God and the poor, a stated proportion of our income, in general not less than one-tenth, however much more it may be. It does not distribute funds, nor enrol members, nor administer pledges, but employs the force of scriptural argument and appeal to convince and persuade men to 'Honour the Lord with their substance and the first-fruits of all their increase;' see Prov. iii. 9, 10; Gen. xxviii. 20-22; and 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

Already remarkable *results* have followed, through the Divine blessing, its teachings; thousands have adopted its lessons; hundreds of

ministers are teaching the principles which they have learned from its publications; great movements in different denominations have originated in the convictions thus produced; tens of thousands of pounds have been expended in noble works of Christian usefulness; the continually-augmenting funds of the great Societies of all Churches may be traced in a large measure to the indirect influence which has been exerted by the principles of the Society; and a spirit of steady and increasing inquiry as to the duty of Christians in this respect is a most cheering sign of still greater progress near at hand.

*The Publications of the Society* have been widely circulated. 'GOLD AND THE GOSPEL' cannot be in the hands of fewer than fifty thousand families; about one hundred thousand of Mr. ARTHUR's eloquent LECTURE have been sown broadcast through the land; to about twenty thousand clergymen of the Established Church as many copies of a beautiful Tract, 'WHAT IS MINE, AND WHAT IS GOD'S?' have been presented; and many thousands of Mr. ROSS's excellent 'BIBLICAL CATECHISM ON THE DEDICATION OF PROPERTY' have been scattered on every hand.

*Great Public Meetings and Conferences* have been held during the past ten years in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, &c.; and a further extension of these meetings is being arranged for the coming season. Similar efforts have been made on the Continent and in America.

THE ULTIMATE DESIGN OF THE SOCIETY will be accomplished when Christian Ministers and Churches take up this subject, and give the principles and practice it advocates their just place in the system of Gospel truth and practice. Meanwhile, persons wishing to co-operate with the Society, can communicate with the Secretary, at 8, Old Jewry, London, E.C.; and can order the publications of the Society of the Secretary, who will forward, on receipt of 1*l.* sterling, by Post Office Order, for gratuitous distribution, 10 copies of 'Gold and the Gospel,' and 10 of Mr. Arthur's Lecture, for the same sum, if for a like purpose; or 100 copies of 'What is Mine, and What is God's?' at 12*s.* per 100; 'Biblical Catechism on the Dedication of Property,' at 3*s.* per 100; and 20 copies of the *Benefactor* for one year for 1*l.*

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## SYNOPSIS OF PRINCIPLES.

### INTRODUCTORY.

1. That the Scriptures are all-sufficient; and, as such, contain a perfect system of Evidences, Doctrines, Ethics, Institutions, and Economics. By Economics we mean the principles which should govern the getting, saving, and giving of money.

2. That while the others are admitted, the last has been too generally overlooked, although revealed with fulness and clearness in the Word of God.

### I.—STEWARDSHIP.

That the leading axioms of Scriptural Economics are as follows:—

- (1) That men are the stewards of God, intrusted with, accountable for, and bound to glorify God with all their substance. (Gen. ii. 8-17; Exod. xix. 5; Matt. xxv. 14-46.) That three classes of objects have been committed by God to His servants, for each and all of which they are required to provide in proper order and in due proportion, viz., (1) The cause of Christ, the poor, and the perishing; (2) Their own and their family's present support; and (3) Old age, sickness, and dependent relatives.
- (2) That the proportion which we should dedicate to God, as a first fruit of our income, ought not to be less than one-tenth in general—however much more it may be; which is inferrible from the standard and examples of Holy Scripture. (Gen. xiv. 18, xxviii. 22; Lev. xxvii. 30-32; Mal. iii. 8; Luke xi. 42.)
- (3) That the dedication to God, as a part of Divine worship, of a due proportion of our increase—in general not less than a tenth—for His especial service and glory, is the appointed Scriptural means of consecrating what remains, of hallowing all the secular engagements of life, of counteracting the natural covetousness of the human heart, and of furnishing all the resources, and consequently maintaining and multiplying the agencies by which the kingdom of Christ is to be established on the earth.
- (4) That the (1) time, (2) persons, (3) method, (4) place, (5) measure, and (6) spirit in which *Christians* are to carry out this Divine ordinance of worship, are authoritatively prescribed in the canon of St. Paul: (1) 'On the first day of the week—(2) let every one of you—(3) lay by ["make a purse"]—(4) himself [or "at home" *chez lui*, French version]—(5) as God hath prospered him, (6) that there be no gatherings when I come.' (1 Cor. xvi. 2; 2 Cor. viii., ix.; 1 Tim. vi. 18-20.)

3. That providential circumstances are now pressing these convictions on the earnest attention of the Catholic Church of Christ in these lands:—

- (1) A large proportion of the Churches is unendowed.
- (2) Religious education has to be provided for the whole people.
- (3) The claims on the charity of Christians are immense.
- (4) The mission field is now the whole world, with its 1,200,000,000 Romanists, Greeks, Jews, Mahomedans, and pagans, which it is utterly in vain to hope to cultivate by those defective and unscriptural agencies and methods of finance which at present obtain, and which depend mainly on solicitation, impulse, ostentation, and necessity; in direct violation of St. Paul's command, 'that there be no gatherings' after that fashion.

4. That these principles, if generally carried out, would supply ample resources for all good purposes; that they are universally applicable; and that, when duly considered, they are very acceptable to Christians in general; and that evidently 'the time to favour Zion is fully come, for her people take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.'

## II.—PROPORTION.

(I.)—*Great Facts, on which the Evidence of the Claim on professing Christians to set apart a stated proportion, say not less than a tenth, of their means and income, for religious and charitable purposes, is based:—*

1. That the great fathers of the faithful, Abraham and Jacob, *were familiar with the obligation of dedicating the tenth*: and that the patriarch Job is represented as exercising a large and regular system of beneficence. (Gen. xiv., xxviii.; Job xxix. 13.)

2. Traces of the existence of the dedication of the tenth amongst the most ancient nations. (See Seldon, Adam Clarke, Cruden, &c.)

3. That it was formally embodied in the Jewish canon of worship, and became the basis of the sacred and scriptural claim of more than a fifth of their income, besides those freewill offerings which they were encouraged to present to God.

4. That, whilst for four thousand years the obligation was admitted as Divine, there is no text in the New Testament which lets a Christian off with less, or relaxes the right and claim of God to the original minimum of *one-tenth*; which, as it existed before the Jewish economy, cannot, by its removal, be displaced from the sure foundation on which it has ever rested, as of Divine appointment.

5. That there are reasons which satisfactorily explain the absence of any injunctions in the New Testament with regard to tithes before the abolition of the Jewish dispensation: and that, when this was removed, it was adopted by the Christian Church; and the general recognition of it ever afterwards by the natural conscience and common sense of mankind, has furnished the main pecuniary support of Christianity in the world.

6. That the want of its full operation on the consciences of modern Christians explains their reluctance to contribute more largely of their substance; leaves the Church without a guide for giving, or a test of covetousness, and thereby defeats the discipline which she is charged to exercise upon the covetous, equally as on the drunkard, the idolator, the railer, or the extortioner (1 Cor. v. 11, and Eph. v. 3); and cripples her in her benevolent mission to the world at large.

7. That the progress in the diffusion of our agencies and principles within the last few years encourages the hope that the Divine blessing accompanies their advocacy; and that the general adoption of them will, ere long, crown the efforts made to secure that most desirable consummation.

(II.)—*Arguments inferrible from these facts, and confirmatory of the Claim of a first Tenth, at least, of Income:—*

1. The *analogy* of the tenth to the Sabbath, sacrifices, and marriage; as respectively the Divine and perpetual mode of sanctioning the great ethical and unchangeable framework of society in all dispensations; viz., the week and the Sabbath, worship and sacrifice, the family and marriage, and stewardship and tithe.

2. Its *strong bold* on the common sense and conscience of mankind for six thousand years.



3. The *rationale* of the tenth, as it recognises God's sovereignty, declares man's stewardship, and provides for Divine ordinances.

4. Its *requirement*, in all previous dispensations, by God, as part of His worship, and its harmony with the other parts of His worship.

5. Its *adaptation*, as compared with Jewish larger claims to Christianity and its milder yoke.

6. That many of the most devout Christians, in all ages and Churches, have devoted the tenth, at least, to God.

7. Its indisputable *necessity* for the service of God, the education of the nation, the relief of the poor, and the conversion of the world.

(III.)—*Objections to the general Claim of a minimum Tenth:*

1. It is legal. 2. Jewish. 3. Dictatorial. 4. Oppressive. 5. Too little. 6. Men will stop at it. 7. It is arithmetical.

These are but seeming difficulties, and are easily removed by any one who has intelligently studied the whole question.

(IV.)—*Advantages of the Dedication of a Tenth, at least:*

1. Its antiquity. 2. Honesty. 3. Humbling Influence. 4. Effectiveness. 5. Excellence. 6. Scripturalness. 7. Reflex advantages.

### III.—SYSTEM.

The practical system which the Society recommends, is the habit of weekly storing for God, as a part of private or family worship, a provision for all recurring claims of charity, and an invaluable training for our children and all Church members in the principles and practice of Christian almsgiving.

(I.)—*Reasons:*

1. Because the apostle enjoined this method in 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; and the early Christians obeyed his command, and practised it for three hundred years, until the known world was nearly evangelised.

2. Because the distribution, by the Divine will, of human life into *weekly portions* alike for worship, work, society, and beneficence, agrees with it.

3. Because the income of all men—rich and poor—is the result, directly or indirectly, of six days' work out of seven; and out of the gains of six days all their offerings should be made on the seventh.

4. The neglect of it lessens the gifts of the Church, and increases the difficulty of their augmentation.

(II.)—*Its great Advantages:*

(1) Its harmony with the habits of society. (2) Its convenience for the masses and for all others, when once fairly tried by rich or poor. (3) Its immense productiveness. (4) Its excellent moral discipline. (5) Its reflex economical advantages. (6) Its scriptural authority. (7) Its apostolic examples.

(III.)—*Objections to it :*

1. Paltry. 2. Artificial. 3. Mechanical. 4. Secularising. 5. Troublesome. 6. Distasteful 7. Novel.

These are all superficial and trifling, and are at once done away with by actual experience.

(IV.)—*General Recommendations :*

1. Simple. 2. Of New Testament character. 3. Spiritualising.  
4. Excellent. 5. Indispensable.

## IV.—CHEERFULNESS.

In the apportionment of contributions, each of the objects which Scripture requires us to promote should, in due proportion, as a part of our Christian life, and as a Christian privilege, be carefully considered and cheerfully provided for.

These *objects* are as follows:—

1. The *support of ordinances*; including ministry, sanctuaries, and books—viz., Bibles and religious periodicals, &c. This is primary.
2. The *religious education* of the nation.
3. The *relief of distress*, by food, shelter, clothes, medicine, &c.
4. The *extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world*, by home, foreign, and colonial missions.

## CONCLUSION.

1. There is urgent need for all our gifts.
2. The claims of God are all consistent with our interests, and inseparable from their true advancement.
3. The neglect of economics has hitherto greatly obstructed the Redeemer's kingdom.
4. And on due attention to them, in connection with the other parts of Divine truth, is suspended the fulfilment of all God's promises for the salvation of the human race.
5. There will be a reward of grace according to work: to those who are 'Saved by grace through faith in Christ.' (See parable of the pounds. See also 'The cup of cold water,' Matt. xxv. 27, and 2 Cor. v. 6.)
6. We are justified by faith without the works of the law (Rom. iii. 28) directly on believing on Christ; but believers will be rewarded according to their works. 'Without faith,' and without that charity which is the fruit of the Spirit alone, in them who believe in Christ, 'it is impossible to please God.' (Heb. xi. 6; John xv. 5; Phil. i. 11; 1 Cor. xiii. 3.)

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